Daily Report

Near East & South Asia

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Yemeni-Eritrean Conflict

Eritrean Coverage of Conflict Over Islands

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For further reportage of the Eritrean-Yemeni confrontation over the Hanish Islands in the Red Sea, including official Eritrean Foreign Ministry statements, please see the East Africa section of the 19 December Sub-Saharan Africa DAILY REPORT and subsequent issues.

Yemen Satisfied With Ethiopian, Egyptian Mediation

JN2712211495 Sanaa Yemeni Republic Radio Network in Arabic 2000 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In its regular meeting, the Council of Ministers resumed discussion of developments resulting from the Eritrean aggression against the Yemeni al-Hanish al-Kabir island and the results of the visits by a number of delegations to a number of Arab capitals.

The council expressed its great appreciation for the support our country is receiving from the brothers [word indistinct]. The council also expressed satisfaction with the mediation efforts of the Ethiopian Government and the Arab Republic of Egypt. The council also emphasized that the Eritrean forces should withdraw and that the situation on the island should return to what it was before 15 December.

The council also discussed the standard of performance in various state organs, and decided that the personnel committees in the ministries, establishments, and [word indistinct] should prepare the annual fitness reports for the employees of the ministries and various [word indistinct] organs in cooperation with the Ministry of Civil Service and Administrative Reform. [passage omitted]

Official Calls For Maritime Border Demarcation

JN2712172395 Amman Radio Jordan Network in Arabic 1200 GMT 27 Dec 95

[Statements by Yemeni Deputy Foreign Minister 'Abduh 'Ali 'Abd-al-Rahman; place and date not given—recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] ['Abd-al-Rahman] Since Eritrea's aggression on the Yemeni island of al-Hanish al-Kabir, Yemen has tried to solve this problem through peaceful means because it believes in the importance of maintaining relations with neighboring states and resolving all disputed issues through a peaceful dialogue. Yemen also knows the significance of the Red Sea and the importance of shipping and stability in our region. It is also Yemen's firm policy to solve border problems with its neighbors through dialogue, as it has done with the fraternal Sultanate of Oman and as it is doing with the brothers in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

We in Yemen did not expect the treacherous aggression on Yemeni territories because Eritrea is a neighboring country and because the Yemeni people have long supported the struggle of the Eritrean people. Since the aggression, Yemen has been meeting with its brothers to keep them informed and to inform the international community of the serious behavior of the brothers in Eritrea.

We welcome Ethiopia's mediation; the foreign minister of friendly Ethiopia has come here twice. We positively responded to this initiative, and we hope that the brothers in Ethiopia will be able to resolve this issue by convincing the Eritrean brothers of their dangerous action and convincing them to withdraw from this Yemeni island and to resort to dialogue to demarcate the maritime border between us, as we have previously asserted to them. We stress our readiness to solve the problem between us and our neighbors in Eritrea through dialogue and the demarcation of the maritime border.

In fact, the brothers, the friends, and the mediators are well aware of the wise position of the Yemeni Government and leadership. We are ready to exert efforts in this direction and we hope that the efforts of the brothers in Ethiopia will produce good results, including the withdrawal of forces and the beginning of negotiations between us and the brothers in Eritrea to demarcate the maritime border.

Palestinian Affairs

Security Forces Take Over Ramallah, al-Birah

JN2712162695 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1400 GMT 27 Dec 95

[Report by Rashid Hilal in Ramallah]

[FBIS Translated Text] Vanguards of the Palestinian National Security Forces entered Ramallah and al-Birah from the headquarters of the Joint Liaison Committee a short while ago. These forces were led by Brigadier General al-Hajj Isma'il Jabr, commander of National Security Forces; Brigadier General Ziyad al-Atrash, head of the Higher Liaison Committee; and Colonel Jibril al-Rujub, commander of the Preventive Security Organ in the West Bank.

The masses of the governorate gathered in front of the command headquarters to salute the Palestinian National forces upon their arrival.

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Before the entry of the forces, the Israeli commander of the Ramallah area handed over the command headquarters to Brigadier General al-Hajj Isma'il. Isma'il emphasized the commitment of the Palestinian and Israeli sides to guarantee the security of both peoples.

For his part, al-Atrash said:

[Begin recording] [Al-Atrash, in progress] ...redeployment, and the deployment of the Palestinian forces everywhere in the West Bank except Hebron in which we will deploy, God willing, directly after the elections.

[Hilal] After taking over Ramallah, what are your plans?

[Al-Atrash] There are arrangements for the Palestinian police, first to ensure security and order of the Palestinian community. On this occasion I want to salute and congratulate our people in Ramallah and our people everywhere whether in the homeland or abroad. The mission of the Palestinian police is to protect the security of the Palestinian people and the establishments of the National Authority until an independent Palestinian state is established.

[Hilal] How many forces entered the city today and how many forces will enter tonight?

[Al-Atrash] According to the agreement, about 1,200 forces will enter today. They will enter at night, and our joy will be completed. I think that we will be with President Yasir 'Arafat in Ramallah. [end recording]

Celebrations of the arrival of the National Forces will begin now and will continue tomorrow.

Israel Cuts Lines Between Ramallah, Jericho VOP

JN2712213295 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1900 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Israeli occupation forces this evening cut off lines between the transmission station in Ramallah and the studios of the Jericho Voice of Palestine while withdrawing from the cities of Ramallah and al-Birah.

The Palestinian Radio and Television Corporation then set up a mobile studio in Ramallah to resume transmission. The corporation's engineering teams repaired the malfunction, which was caused by the withdrawing occupation forces.

Minister Reacts to Confiscation of Land by Israel

JN2712164095 Jericho Voice of Palestine in Arabic 1211 GMT 27 Dec 95

[From the "Today's Events" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Information Minister Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh said today that the Israeli occupation forces are taking advantage of the redeployment process currently under way in the Palestinian towns and of the preparations for the upcoming legislative elections by seizing and confiscating vast areas of the Palestinian lands, particularly in occupied Jerusalem. About the issue of confiscation and what is required from our people, Yasir 'Abd-Rabbuh told our radio:

[Begin 'Abd-Rabbuh recording] Under the cover of redeployment and the preparations for the elections, it seems that the Israeli Government is now planning for and carrying out a new and large-scale settlement campaign in Jerusalem, Bayt Hanina, Ramallah, Baytuniya, Hebron, Tulkarm, Qalqilyah, and Nabulus. This is a comprehensive settlement campaign and is in fact thievery by the Israeli Government and is carried out by the generals in a bid to devour more Palestinian lands and impose a new reality — namely, fragmenting the Palestinian areas and separating them from each other, as well as imposing the implementation of a settlement plan in Jerusalem. This plan had been partially abandoned by the Israeli Government under Arab and international pressure in the past.

We believe that this thievery and expansionist action by the Israeli Government, which is carried out under the cover of elections and redeployment, encourages settlement activities. Instead of curbing such activities and halting them, Israel tries to impose a new reality in which it will have a completely free hand in the Palestinian areas. We believe that such action requires the greatest popular confrontation possible and a firm stand on the part of the Palestinian National Authority.

From my position in the Authority, I think that the Authority is called on to firmly address those who loot and plunder Palestinian land within the next few hours to stop this crime once and for all.

We are all required to take action. Instead of launching campaigns—some of which apparently have nothing to do with national concerns, such as the irresponsible ones taking place before the election campaign—we are all required to rechannel such campaigns and direct them toward the cause of the land, to defy the bulldozers, and firmly confront them with all possible means.

We cannot celebrate the Israeli withdrawal from Ramallah today, while a few hundred meters from Ramallah, the bulldozers usurp more Palestinian lands. This is a position we are all required to adopt; the Palestinian Authority, all the national powers, all the national institutions and key figures, and all those who are assuming a national role whether within the framework of the elections or outside of them, should defy the bulldozers and the thievery carried out by the Israeli Government, generals, and settlers.

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Today is crucial; we should confront this situation with responsibility and with all our energies. [end recording]

King Husayn, 'Arafat To Discuss Confederation Soon

TA2712172895 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 26 Dec 95 p 1

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-NAHAR office — 'Umar al-Khatib, Palestinian ambassador to Jordan, said that as soon as the Palestinian elections slated for 20 January are over, there will be a meeting between Jordanian monarch King Husayn and Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat in order to discuss the issue of confederation between the two sides.

Al-Khatib added that the Palestinian National Authority has always called for confederation with Jordan and that since 1988 the National Council in Algeria adopted a decision on the establishment of confederal relations with Jordan.

Independent Candidates Form 'Democratic Coalition'

TA2712175495 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 26 Dec 95 p 8

[FBIS Translated Text] Bethlehem, QUDS-PRESS — The establishment of a coalition has been announced in the Palestinian territories. The coalition includes a number of independent candidates from the West Bank and the Gaza Strip who will run in the elections for the first legislative council, which are to be held on 20 January.

In a brief statement signed by Dr. Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi and which was obtained by QUDS-PRESS, it was said that "the National Democratic Coalition" is committed to an election program devoted to the political, economic, and social concerns of the Palestinians. The statement said that the program seeks to spread democratic concepts in society.

The statement stressed that the coalition "will concern itself with the needs of Palestinians in their places of refuge." The statement also said that lists of candidates are being formed currently within framework of this coalition in all 16 constituencies.

Fatah, PNC, Hamas Officials View Cairo Talks

Fatah's al-Lawh

TA2712183695 Gaza AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH in Arabic 26 Dec 95 p 2

[Report by 'Abd-al-Raziq Abu-Jazr]

[FBIS Translated Text] Gaza, AL-HAYAH AL-JADIDAH office — Dhiyab al-Lawh, Fatah official spokesman, has said that the Islamic Salvation Party was established in order to free Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] from shouldering a historic and direct responsibility in this difficult stage for the Palestinian people. It will also free Hamas from the need to adopt historic decisions with regard to subsequent developments. In an interview with AL- HAYAH AL-JADIDAH, al-Lawh denied that Fatah intends to establish a political party at this stage.

He added that Fatah does not view the current settlement as a final one, because it does not fulfill all the Palestinian people's national aspirations. He said: "Fatah has historical and national responsibilities which we are striving to achieve in the current stage, especially since we are on the verge of beginning the final solution talks."

With regard to the recent Cairo talks between the National Authority and Hamas and the latter's refusal to participate in the elections, al-Lawh said: "The agreement reached by the two sides is an agreement on marginal issues and not on political issues."

Al-Lawh stressed the need for fraternal meetings despite the disappointing results, as happened in Cairo. He hoped that further meetings will be held in the future. Al-Lawh called on the Islamic movement to participate in the elections, because its participation is necessary, especially if it intends to participate in the Palestinian national construction process.

He added that Hamas' absence does not mean that Fatah is alone in the elections. There is a good group of independents in addition to the other national parties. The elected legislative council will have many political colors.

Al-Lawh added that the final results of the elections will determine the proportion of representation of each Palestinian faction in the Palestinian political arena. Hamas' nonparticipation stems from its fear of shouldering responsibility for building an aware Palestinian movement and from its inability to interact with regional and international political changes. Hamas does not want to bother itself in adopting crucial decisions.

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Al-Lawh stressed that reaching a comprehensive agreement between the two sides, especially on halting acts of violence, will have a positive impact on the release of all Palestinian prisoners.

With regard to the annulment of the Palestinian National Charter, al-Lawh added that he favors the annulment of some of its articles, especially if it produces positive results which will propel the Palestinian people to better stages.

National Council's al-Za'nun

TA2812090995 Jerusalem AL-MANAR in Arabic 25 Dec 95 p 3

[Interview with Salim al-Za'nun, acting speaker of the Palestine National Council and head of the PA delegation to the recent Cairo talks with Hamas, by 'Ali Khamis in Cairo; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Khamis] How do you assess the talks with Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement]? How fruitful were they?

[Al-Za'nun] This was the first round of meetings in which frankness prevailed. We exchanged notes about the previous round, so that this would lead to joint understanding about the need to avoid all negative aspects and reinforce the positive aspects. The most important of these positive aspects is that regardless of how much tension increases between the National Authority [NA; Palestinian Authority, PA] and Hamas, there is an honor charter so matters will not lead to infighting.

Israel delayed the handing over of the West Bank by more than a year and a half. Some quarters wagered on internecine fighting or a new Afghanistan in the Gaza Strip. That would have prevented Palestinian towns from welcoming the NA, or would have made Gaza First and Last. The NA's continuous wise behavior and Hamas' rational conduct foiled this.

The NA's extension now to about 30 percent of the West Bank has also made those in the Palestinian arena who were wavering come back to the peace process. The more the snowball rolls the bigger it gets.

A climate of pragmatism prevailed in the talks with Hamas, represented by a sounding out in the Palestinian street which sometimes suffered from behavior that was out of place and which led to postponement of the NA's extension, or gave the Israelis a pretext to impose closures and restrictions on the Palestinian people.

Hence, as two delegations, we began to list common denominators that would lead to lifting the Palestinian people's suffering and give the NA the chance to achieve all its goals and promote national unity on the basis of general freedoms and political pluralism with the participation of and response of the minority to the majority's view and the majority's respect for the minority's view.

We are deliberating on a very important question, namely; the elections. Naturally, we expect different viewpoints, but hopefully we will overcome those differences. We hope that our brothers in Hamas will reassess their position and nominate themselves for the legislative council seats after having taken the positive step of calling on their cadres to register their names on the voting rolls.

Latest figures indicate that 94 percent of the Palestinian people have registered their names on the voter rolls. This is a very high registration percentage. This means that in the first stage all followers of factions as well as the Palestinian people have shown a desire to take part in the elections. Therefore, there is a consensus to participate in the elections, but some parties might not want to run in the elections the first time and may run in later stages, or they might suspect that there will be self-rule in the end.

Naturally, we respect this decision, but there is a more important thing that makes us hope that everyone will participate, which is that these are the first elections by the Palestinian people. They will transfer the institution from its present situation, which came about through appointment, to a more democratic situation. A legislative council will choose a 25-member executive council. Namely, there are significant indications that the Palestinian people will govern themselves and will get ready for next May to tackle the basic issues that have been postponed until the final stage, including Jerusalem, settlements, refugees, borders, and other issues on which we do not differ with any faction in the arena, especially Hamas.

[Khamis] Did Hamas' refusal to lay down its weapons constitute an obstacle in the Cairo talks?

[Al-Za'nun] In fact, the laying down of weapons by Hamas was not discussed in the Cairo talks and was not on the agenda. Therefore, it seems that this talk was carried on outside the negotiating hall. As the sponsor of this dialogue, I say that this issue was not discussed.

[Khamis] To what extent are the Oslo Accords an impediment to rapprochement between the NA and Hamas?

[Al-Za'nun] We wish to view things in a realistic way, but rejection of the Oslo Accords is one thing and the issues that resulted from the accords and that the NA managed to achieve is another thing with which we

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should deal realistically, because we believe in that. Hamas must cooperate with us.

[Khamis] Will those things that are agreed on be documented, and what subjects were discussed?

[Al-Za'nun] When we concluded discussion of each article on the agenda, we formulated it in a joint drafting committee. The agenda was made up of seven articles, foremost of which are national unity and political pluralism. This is what we agreed on. Then, there was the issue of elections, the NA's international commitments, issues relating to the upcoming final stage, the issue of propaganda, and some other articles.

[Khamis] To what extent does Jerusalem represent a bone of contention between Hamas and the NA?

[Al-Za'nun] As opposed to the previous policy, we, Hamas, and all Palestinian factions — through a dialogue held in Gaza — are in agreement on the issue of Jerusalem. There is no disagreement at all in dealing with the Jerusalem issue.

[Khamis] Which Palestinian factions have decided to participate in the elections so far?

[Al-Za'nun] The Palestinian People's Party and FIDA [Palestinian Democratic Union] have decided to participate in the elections. So too have the Islamic National Union, the Islamic Front, the Democratic Movement for Change headed by Haydar 'Abd-al-Shafi, and Fatah. All of them have decided to participate in the elections. No one is left except Hamas and the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine.

[Khamis] Did Israel play a role in obstructing the talks with Hamas?

[Al-Za'nun] We do not permit Israel to interfere in our internal affairs. Just as we do not interfere between Israeli parties, we do not allow Israel to interfere in the affairs of our parties.

On the other hand, Hamas held a meeting of its internal and external leaderships in Sudan. After it formulated its position, it came to hold talks with us in Cairo. I do not believe that the Sudanese regime itself interfered in the Hamas decision.

[Khamis] Can Hamas' refusal to participate in the elections be considered a failure of the Cairo talks?

[Al-Za'nun] Out of its concern that all the Palestinian people be represented in the legislative council, the NA is trying to persuade Hamas by all the means to nominate their candidates in these elections, so that there will be pluralism and a more comprehensive representation in the council. Apparently, however, this point is being rejected in Hamas. What we managed to achieve is viewing these elections with satisfaction and letting the Palestinian people express their will. Hamas cannot go back on its position which it announced in a statement on the issue of participation in nominating its candidates for these elections.

Naturally, we do not consider this a bad result, because if parties in general register their members in the voters' lists they participate one way or another in the electoral process. Every party, however, has the right — according to its situation — to decide in which round of elections it will participate, in this round or the upcoming rounds. [passage omitted]

Hamas Spokesman Ghawshah

TA2712194695 Jerusalem AL-NAHAR in Arabic 26 Dec 95 p 7

["Exclusive" AL-NAHAR report]

[FBIS Translated Text] Amman, AL-NAHAR office — Ibrahim Ghawshah, Hamas [Islamic Resistance Movement] media spokesman, said that the dialogue in Cairo between the Palestinian National Authority and Hamas was good.

Ghawshah added that it was clear to everyone that Hamas inside and outside are indivisible. Those who wagered that Hamas would sign a truce or halt its struggle against Israeli quarters and would announce its participation in the Palestinian elections at the last moment were disappointed once again.

Ghawshah, who did not participate in the Cairo dialogue, explained that it is clear and accords to the statement broadcast and signed by Hamas delegation head Khalid Mash'al and Salim al- Za'nun, acting speaker of the Palestine National Council, that the movement agreed with the Authority on several points. The most important of which are: preserving national unity, spreading a climate of dialogue and understanding between the two sides, and the issue of detainees and prisoners inside Israeli jails. Apart from this, Hamas will form a delegation inside to meet with the Authority whenever the need arises.

He said that Hamas clarified its position on the continuation of resistance against the Israeli occupation as long as it exists on Palestinian land. Our position regarding participation in the Palestinian elections is based on several considerations, the most important of which is that the elections are being held on the basis of the Oslo accords and that they bestow legitimacy on the Israeli occupation. For its part, Hamas will not force anyone to boycott the elections. It also does not embarrass the Authority because acts of resistance are directed against the occupation and not against it.

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Ghawshah denied the report that Hamas requested from the Authority some time to consult with its cadres inside the territories on issues of contention. He said that Hamas went to the dialogue following lengthy consultations with its institutions both inside or outside. As for consulting once again with its cadres, this is what the National Authority is disseminating.

Ghawshaw said that undoubtedly tension and pressure prevailed in Palestinian society. After Hamas clarified its commitment to the unity of the Palestinian rank, it can be said that our Palestinian people breathed a sigh of relief somewhat following this dialogue.

He added that the nonparticipation of Palestinian president Yasir 'Arafat in the dialogue is a personal decision, although some observers believed that it would have been appropriate for him to attend this meeting to consolidate the pillars of Palestinian democracy.

He said that it was agreed to establish an internal dialogue committee by the two sides to discuss issues of contention. We hope that this step will be implemented quickly so that it will help us to hold dialogue and meetings.

He added that contradiction between the programs of Hamas and the Authority is undoubtedly not minor, but we do not wish to oppose the Oslo program by force. We want to use that force to fight the occupation. On the other hand, we demand from the Oslo program not to clash with the resistance program adopted by Hamas by physical force. This is so that the two programs will proceed in tandem and so that each program will realize its achievements, if it is able to do so. This is because we in Hamas believe that the Oslo program, A and B, will soon be halted, and the Palestinian people will discover that the Zionist occupation is still controlling 95 percent of the area of Palestine. At that time, we resolutely believe that these people will back the resistance program because it is the only program that can realize the demands and aims of the Palestinian people.

He said that the issue of Hamas prisoners inside Israeli jails was discussed. The Authority delegation expressed its understanding of this point, and we believe it is one of the crucial and critical issues. Moreover, we also believe that the continuation of resistance will not be halted as long as there is one prisoner languishing in the occupation's jails.

Hamas' Nazzal

MM2812092995 London AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT in Arabic 23 Dec 95 p 3

[Report by Sawsan Abu-Husayn: "Muhammad Nazzal Tells AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT: Hamas' Dialogue With Palestinian Authority Has Not Failed, We Reject the Elections Because They Disregard the Palestinians Abroad"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo — Muhammad Nazzal, member of the Executive Bureau of the Islamic Resistance Movement (Hamas) and its representative in Amman, has refused to consider the dialogue with the Palestinian Authority [PA] a failure. In an interview with AL-SHARQ AL-AWSAT, Nazzal pinpointed the reasons which led his movement to reaffirm its position rejecting participation in the Palestinian Legislative Council elections.

Nazzal, who is the official spokesman for the movement's delegation for the dialogue with the PA which ended the day before yesterday in Cairo without an agreement being reached by the two sides, said that the elections disregard more than 5 million Palestinians residing abroad, and that his movement rejects anything which stems from the Oslo Palestinian-Israeli agreement.

Nazzal pointed to the possibility that 'Arafat might soon meet in Gaza with a Hamas delegation from inside the territories to discuss all the issues that will be raised.

In response to a question on the reasons for refusing to participate in the elections, Nazzal said: "First, we refuse to participate in self-rule elections involving only the residents [of the territories]. Secondly, the Palestinian elections disregard more than 5 million Palestinians residing abroad, and consequently, we must show solidarity with these people who represent the whole of our Palestinian people. Thirdly, the way that the elections will be held is a vague indication that Israel is adamant in its position with regard to Jerusalem being part of Israel. We also reject the Oslo agreement as a whole as it would only lead to reaffirming the fait accompli and make the Palestinian people live under Israeli sovereignty. Could anything be more serious?"

Nazzal added: "Hamas' presence on the elected council would serve no purpose, because even if we succeeded in securing a majority, we would not be able to cancel the Oslo agreement which has maintained Israeli sovereignty and the failure to withdraw completely from Palestinian territories. We therefore believe that the elected council cannot achieve what we want, especially with regard to fundamental issues such as Jerusalem, the settlements, and the refugees. The elected council would

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have to amend the Palestinian National Charter, which defines Palestine and its borders from the river to the sea and is the charter on which all Palestinians agree. That is why we do not believe that our participation in the elected council would benefit the people or Hamas in any way."

Commenting on Hamas' agreement with the PA not to ask its members to boycott the elections, Nazzal said: "We have asked our supporters to register their names in the electoral lists for reasons concerning our agreement to participate in the municipal elections."

On the reasons for the Cairo dialogue's failure, he said: "First, this question is not accurate. It would be better to say that the dialogue has achieved a relative success through the agreement to pursue the meetings between us and the PA and avoid Palestinian infighting, and on the need to strengthen Palestinian national unity. All this confirms the dialogue's success."

On the delay in issuing the closing statement, Nazzal said: "This was due to disagreement on the text. We both proposed drafts and the drafting committee reviewed the clauses which were agreed and chose appropriate terms for the clauses on which there was disagreement. The PA delegation asked us for a specific wording with regard to our refusal to halt armed struggle. On our side, we believe that it is important that it should be continued, because the Israeli occupation is still present; when it is over the guns will fall silent of their own accord, and this will not need a resolution. Also with regard to the elections, we agree on the municipal elections but reject the Palestinian self-rule elections."

Arab-Israeli Talks

Israel, Syria Said Favoring U.S. Bridging Proposal

TA2812074895

[FBIS Editorial Report] All Israeli dailies on 28 December carry front-page reports on last nights start of the Israeli-Syrian talks at the Wye Plantation in Maryland, by their correspondents on the scene.

Tel Aviv YEDI'OT AHARONOT in Hebrew carries a 400-word report by Shim'on Schiffer on pages 1 and 19 saying that, at the opening of the talks, Foreign Ministry Director General Uri Savir asked the Syrians "to propose 'stations of normalization' in the relations between the two countries — even before the discussions begin on early warning stations on the Golan Heights.

"The purpose of this request is to receive clarifications regarding the nature of peace as seen by Syrian President al-Asad, and to determine stages on the road to establishing peace between Israel and Syria." Citing unidentified "sources," Schiffer reports that in his opening statement, "Savir again stressed that, as far as Israel is concerned, everything is open for discussion. He said that the Israeli representatives did not come to deal with past disagreements, but to openly, candidly, and truly examine the real needs of the parties."

A 600-word report by 'Aqiva Eldar on pages A1 and A10 in Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew cites "a senior Israeli source who is taking part in the negotiations between Israel and Syria" as saying that "in return for an Israeli commitment to withdraw to the lines of 4 June 1967, Syria is willing to quickly sign a peace agreement with Israel, based on the Camp David model, including a mutual opening of embassies and open borders, with government supervision of the pace of normalization as done with Egypt." The source added that "Israel and Syria are unanimous on the importance of a U.S. bridging offer as the only way to extract the negotiations from any deadlock they may encounter in view of Syria's demand that Israel first pledge a full withdrawal and Israel's refusal to withdraw beyond the 1923 international border."

In a 300-word report on pages 1 and 2 of Tel Aviv MA'ARIV in Hebrew, Avino'am Bar-Yosef writes: "The United States will consider making a bridging offer to determine the line of Israeli withdrawal from the Golan Heights soon after U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher concludes his visit to Damascus and Jerusalem, which will start on 8 January. Israel and Syria both favor such a bridging offer, but the Clinton administration wants to make sure that the offer will be accepted by both sides. The American intention was made known yesterday, as the talks between Israel and Syria started in Maryland."

Damascus Radio Reports on Start of Talks in U.S.

JN2812074295 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0515 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Maryland—The first session of Syrian-Israeli talks began at 1300 Washington time yesterday, in the presence of the U.S. cosponsor.

The VOA said that the talks began amid signs that the U.S. side will this time play a more active role than in the past. The radio quoted Walid al-Mu'allim, head of the Syrian delegation to the negotiations, as saying that his delegation begins the talks with an open mind and with instructions to show flexibility, and, at the same time, defend Syria's stands.

Uri Savir, head of the Israeli delegation expressed his optimism over the chances of achieving peace with Syria. He said: The two sides begin talks in a very positive manner.

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It is worth noting that the U.S. delegation participating in the talks comprises Dennis Ross, coordinator of the Middle East peace process; Mark Parris, U.S. National Security adviser; Aaron Miller, assistant to the coordinator of the Middle East affairs at the U.S. State Department; and Toni Verstandig, assistant to the coordinator of the Middle East affairs at the U.S. State Department.

State Department spokesman Glyn Davies yesterday said that U.S. President Clinton's administration will play an efficient role in the peace talks on the Syrian-Israeli track, which resumed in Maryland, near Washington, yesterday.

Davies added that U.S. officials will participate in all sessions with the Syrians and Israelis, expressing the U.S. Administration's hope that it would be able to facilitate the work of the parties during their meeting, which will deal with a host of issues.

The spokesman did not rule out that these talks, which resumed yesterday, will last longer than the three days initially scheduled. He added that there was no agenda for the peace talks, and that the meeting venue will help create an atmosphere of frankness.

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Algeria

'Misled' Youths Urged To 'Hurry' for Amnesty

LD2712131395 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1059 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Oh you misled young people, the national people's army and all the security forces announce to the young people who have decided to return to the correct path to hurry and benefit from this valuable [amnesty] opportunity available to them and return to their relatives and kinsfolk, and not to hesitate in joining numerous others like them who have come back individually and collectively to their conscience despite the pressures and lies exerted on them by the criminals, traitors, and mercenaries, so that happiness prevails, harmony spreads, wounds are dressed, and pains cured. They also offered all guarantees to protect their lives and good treatment.

Islamists Clash With Security Forces; 5 Killed

LD2712145595 Paris Radio France International in French 1230 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] In Algeria, two policemen, a soldier, and two armed Islamists were killed yesterday in the course of an extremely violent clash between the security forces and an armed group in the center of Algiers. The group was, it seems, attempting to extort money from a trader when police intervened; but it took an elite squad, backed up by paratroopers, over five hours to overpower the last of the assailants, who had taken cover in an apartment on Rue Volta, a street just off one of the capital's main thoroughfares, Rue Didouche Mourad.

Security Services Kill 16 'Criminals'

LD2712191195 Algiers Radio Algiers Network in Arabic 1830 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] A statement released by the security services today said that the security forces had killed 16 criminals in Algiers, Constantine, Blida, Relizane, Oum El Bouaghi and Guelma. During these operations the security forces managed to recover a quantity of weapons and ammunition.

Another statement by the security services said that the security forces yesterday killed a criminal in Rue Didouche Mourad, in Algiers, after he had taken a family hostage.

Egypt

Paper on Expected Change in Arab-Israeli Relations

NC2812071295 Cairo Arab Republic of Egypt Radio Network in Arabic 0435 GMT 28 Dec 95

[From the press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] In a commentary, "An Egyptian Move To Confront the Challenges," AL-AHRAM notes President Husni Mubarak's flying visit to Jordan and his meeting with King Husayn to stress Egypt's desire to back the Arab stance in this historic era of radical change that will put the Arabs on the threshold of the 21st century.

The paper points out that an indication of these changes is the start of the Syrian-Israeli negotiations; all the signs are that they will be serious negotiations that could soon lead to a declaration of principles on a peaceful settlement between the two countries. This would open the door to a similar settlement on the Lebanese-Israeli track.

The paper adds that current Egyptian moves aim to coordinate Arab stances as the new year approaches. They promise an end to the Arab-Israeli military conflict and a new era of Arab-Israeli relations, which could turn out to be tougher than the era of military conflict and could determine the future of the Arab peoples. The conflict will turn into a cultural confrontation in which victory will go to those who stand fast longest as well as those who can use all their political, economic, and cultural resources to secure their position and future.

Minister on Financing of 'Terrorists,' Arab Security

NC2812084295 Cairo MENA in Arabic 0610 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Cairo, 28 Dec (MENA)—Interior Minister Hasan al-Alfi has denied that Egyptian security men travelled to England to liquidate terrorist elements there. He noted that the security forces' job is to protect Egypt and its people from elements operating against the interests of the homeland and engaging in acts of sabotage and bloodletting, whether they are inside the country or are infiltrating from abroad.

In an interview with today's AL-JUMHURIYAH, al-Alfi noted that several centers finance and organize terrorist operations abroad. There are Islamic centers and societies run by people who maintain relations with terrorist groups. They use the money collected for charity, in the form of alms or donations, to finance these groups, he added.

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He noted that the arrested infiltrators carry weapons and money. About 25,000 pounds sterling, $3,000, and 50,000 Egyptian pounds were found with recently arrested members of the al-Jihad group who came from Sudan. Al-Alfi emphasized that Egyptian security agencies tried hard during the recent parliamentary elections to secure voters and candidates and prevent any terrorist operation, particularly following terrorist threats and in light of information about a major plan to strike Egyptian targets during the elections.

The interior minister called on Arab interior ministers to agree to unlock an inter-Arab mechanism to coordinate, organize, and exchange information and adopt a collective and unified stance on terrorism at their meeting in Tunis. Al-Alfi called for adopting a unified inter-Arab agreement to be passed and honored collectively to extradite criminals, prohibit the sheltering of terrorists, and block channels financing them. Such an agreement, if endorsed, would satisfy the purpose, an end to terrorism, he added.

Al-Alfi noted that Egypt seeks not to punish Sudan, but hopes only to see everybody abide by the duties and responsibilities of Arab conscience. Al-Alfi noted that he warned the Arab interior ministers at their most recent conference and that his warnings proved to be accurate, because disturbances took place in Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Tunisia, and Algeria. He added: This is an episode that will not end except by common Arab and international action. Al-Alfi emphasized that he will explain everything to his Arab counterparts, including the Sudanese interior minister, at their meeting in Tunis on 4 January and provide them with authentic information to adopt a unified Arab stance to avert the danger threatening us all.

Mubarak Discusses 'Terrorism,' Weapons, Eritrea

NC2712202995 Cairo MENA in Arabic
1845 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—President Husni Mubarak met today in Hulwan with trainee teachers who returned from training missions abroad. The meeting was attended by Minister of Information Safwat al-Sharif. It was also attended by Minister of Education Dr. Husayn Kamal Baha'-al-Din, who said these teachers attended training courses in Britain, France, and the United States. [passage omitted]

Information Minister Safwat al-Sharif said that during the meeting President Mubarak discussed the recent People's Assembly elections. President Mubarak affirmed that the government did not interfere in the election process. [passage omitted]

On relations between Egypt and Britain, President Mubarak said that recently there has been cooperation between the two countries in the field of confronting terrorist elements after Britain has become a refuge for many of these elements. He expressed surprise at the shameful acts committed by these elements who hide behind religion. President Mubarak affirmed that all laws in Egypt conform with the Islamic shari'ah. He also expressed surprise at the states that export terrorism to Egypt, such as Sudan, and that describe those who committed the criminal attack on him in Addis Ababa as mujahidin. President Mubarak said: I will obey only what is right, no matter what, and I will not submit to pressure.

Answering a question on the dispute between Yemen and Eritrea, President Mubarak said Egypt is undertaking efforts to contain the dispute. Eritrea is a friendly African country and Yemen is a fraternal Arab country. In our endeavor to reach a peaceful solution we will not take sides. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on the bombing of the Egyptian Embassy in Islamabad, President Mubarak said it is the duty of states to protect all installations, including embassies, on their territory. [passage omitted]

Answering a question on Israel's nuclear program, President Mubarak referred to Egypt's firm and declared stand which calls for the Middle East to be free of weapons of mass destruction. This is in the interest of all the people of the region. Egypt also calls for a halt to the arms race in the region. President Mubarak added: We will continue to discuss this issue with Israel until a comprehensive peace is achieved. Emptying the region of nuclear weapons means that peace is real peace.

Security Officer in al-Minya 'Shot by Mistake'

NC2712205995 Cairo MENA in English
1945 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Cairo, 27 Dec (MENA)—A first Lieutenant, Hisham 'Abdallah 'Ali of the Central Security Force in al-Minya, was shot by mistake today.

According to an Interior Ministry source, a bullet was fired from the first lieutenant's licensed weapon wounding his left thigh while he was on duty.

The officer was rushed to hospital for treatment, added the source.

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Mauritania

Media Reportedly Begin Anti-Saddam Campaign

NC2712191595 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Mauritanian media have begun a counteractive campaign to expose the malicious intentions of Saddam Husayn's regime carried out by his aides in Mauritania.

(Ahmad al-Bannao), press adviser to the Mauritanian president and director of television, said that radical changes in Mauritania's political stand toward Saddam Husayn's regime demanded the purging of the government's media apparatus of the influence of the tyrant's regime. This includes the television, which was funded by the Saddam regime, as well as some Mauritanian newspapers.

He revealed the Baghdad regime's involvement in toppling [as heard] the Mauritanian regime. He added that the Baghdad regime enforced its presence not only within the media agencies but also in all the party institutions influenced by the Baghdad regime. Moreover, he noted, many officers of the Mauritanian Army were loyal to that regime.

Explaining Mauritania's stand during the invasion of Kuwait, the Mauritanian official said it was because the Saddam regime's influence dominated the Mauritanian public, which has been mobilized for more than 18 years to support the tyrant's regime.

Sudan

Government States Support for Yemen in Hanish Row

EA2712191195 Omdurman Republic of Sudan Radio Network in Arabic 0430 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sudan has declared its firm support for Yemen's right of ownership to Greater Hanish, which has been the object of aggression by forces of the Eritrean regime.

A statement from the Foreign Ministry praises those states which have taken Yemen's side. The statement calls on the remaining governments to stand by Yemen so as to avert the threat to stability in the region.

Al-Mahdi, Supporters To Boycott 1996 Elections

MM2812110395 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 27 Dec 95 p 5

[Report by Kamal Hamid: "Al-Mahdi Tells AL-HAYAH: I Shall Not Participate in the Presidential Elections"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Khartoum — Sadiq al-Mahdi, Sudanese al-Ummah opposition party leader and former premier, has stressed that his supporters will not participate in the next presidential and parliamentary elections and that they reject in advance the outcome of the elections, scheduled to be held next February.

Commenting on the 13th constitutional decree concerning the elections ratified by President 'Umar al-Bashir last Sunday, al-Mahdi told AL-HAYAH: "We reject this decree and reject the elections which will be based on it."

Al-Mahdi pointed out however that there are positive elements in the decree, which he summed up as a modern development in the constitution's history leading to a presidential system befitting Sudan's circumstances, saying that he thinks that the decree reflects a belief in the principle of separation of powers and some democratic principles. He added that this development "concerns the government and its supporters but does not concern us; and neither does it concern the Sudanese people, who aspire to complete freedom and a better constitutional life in view of their experience in this context."

He reiterated his demand to hold a comprehensive constitutional congress "to discuss the two most important issues facing Sudan, namely a democratic government and achieving peace." He said: "From our own previous experience, any talk about elections in the shadow of war is an example of abuse and failure, despite the fact that our democratic circumstances were better."

He severely criticized the "political system" created by al-Bashir's government, saying that it is "a one-party formula, like the Socialist Union's system" adopted by former President Ja'far Numayri's regime. Al-Mahdi described this formula as "a failed experiment far removed from democracy."

In response to a question regarding the fairness of the elections in view of the government's announcement that it is ready to welcome foreign observers, he said: "There is no sign of neutrality or fairness, because the ruling regime is the one holding the elections under fanatic party control. I do not think that human rights will be protected because the security organ controls the running of the country."

Some Sudanese officials had asked al-Mahdi and Colonel John Garang, the Sudanese People's Liberation Army's leader, to put their candidacy forward in the presidential elections.

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Article on 'Unprecedented Shock' in GCC Relations

96AE0009A London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 13 Dec 95 p 17

[Article by Muhammad al-Rumayli, editor in chief of AL-'ARABI magazine: "Reading of GCC Statements—Lowering the Voice or New Vigor?"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] The ordinary citizen in the Gulf countries regards the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) with much hope and little satisfaction. The hope is that the Council will fashion from its members in concert a single will and a political, military, and economic force able to confront the major challenges that face this region; for the GCC countries separately—especially the small ones—cannot confront these challenges successfully. Some of the challenges are real; others may be imaginary. Among the real challenges are the ambitions of the relatively big neighbors, Iraq and Iran. Each from its own point of view and interests sees a possible sphere of political, military, or economic influence in the region. They are relatively big countries, and they have ideologies they desire to spread and propagate. Of course, there are other challenges, not the least of which are economic—such as the decline of oil prices, the slump in economic activity, and the rise in the price of imported goods and services. A series of disturbing economic phenomena has resulted. Inflation rates have risen, the purchasing power of the local currency has declined, and budget deficits have worsened. These negative economic indicators come at a time when large numbers of citizens are entering the local job market. The result in some countries has been visible unemployment in the local labor force, which may turn into dangerous political pressures.

How have Gulf summit statements handled these major changes since the beginning of the nineties, not to mention follow up and implementation?

I have tried to review here the main indicators in Gulf summit statements since the occupation and liberation of Kuwait, not before, because I think that this has been the most serious period of challenge the region has experienced in its modern history. What has happened?

Four main observations can indicate what is general, essential, and common in these statements. To be selective, rather than exhaustive, they are as follows:

1. The experts pay attention to certain areas in formulating statements. These, more or less, are relations with Iraq, Arab-Israeli peace, Bosnia, and cooperation among GCC countries. There are new variations if some emergency occurs. As an illustration and example, the attack on a mosque (of Babur) in India was discussed in the final statement of the 13th summit (Abu Dhaby, 22 December 1992).

2. The criticism and condemnation regarding the same subject becomes stronger or weaker. If we take relations with Iraq as an example, we find that the first statements (1991, 1992, and 1993) talked about "the Iraqi regime," while the 1994 and 1995 statements referred to "the Iraqi Government." What did not change in all the statements was stress on the GCC's concern for "Iraq's regional unity and safety." In contrast to this detail, a later statement made a brief reference to the suffering of the Iraqi people. The statement of the 12th summit spelled this out as follows: "The Supreme Council notes with great sadness the continued suffering of the Iraqi people, who continue to pay the price for the Iraqi regime's bad policy, stubbornness, and contempt for the principles of international behavior and the rulings of legitimate international authority. The regime has continued to entrench a policy of humiliating the Iraqi people. It has insisted on prolonging the suffering and human tragedy of the Iraqi people—a tragedy that can be alleviated or ended only if the Iraqi regime honors its international obligations."

The closing statement of the 16th summit (Muscat, 6 December 1995) alludes to the same subject as follows: "The Council has noted with extreme sadness that the policy of procrastination, which the Iraqi government has followed in previous years toward implementing Security Council resolutions, has led to the wrecking of Iraq's structure humanly, economically, and socially. It has destroyed Iraq's capacities and its vital role in the region. It has used the suffering of the Iraqi people as a means to exert pressure to lift the embargo from the regime without its pledge to implement the Security Council's resolutions."

We can deduce from the two previous texts that the suffering of the Iraqi people and the stratagems of their regime are contrasting themes. Thus, what was hoped for was to stimulate deeper and more serious reflection about courses and policies that would move from the negative assigning of blame to helping the Iraqi people overthrow their regime—rather than waiting for the wolf to die and the flock to perish at the same time.

3. Some GCC concluding statements refer to policies and resolutions that are not followed up in subsequent statements. Two examples of this are typical:

The statement of the 15th summit (al-Manamah) referred to "developing and stimulating economic cooperation among GCC countries and redoubled efforts to end bilateral problems between GCC countries before the meeting of the 16th session of the Supreme Council." Thus, a definite date was set "to end bilateral problems."

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However, the latest statement makes no positive or negative reference to the subject. It ought to have been discussed or alluded to, even on the basis of what has been achieved and what, though unachieved, is hoped to be achieved. At the summit before al-Manamah, the 14th (Riyadh, 22 December 1993), there was reference to "forming a high committee to monitor implementation of collective defense and military cooperation resolutions, with the chairmanship rotating annually among GCC defense ministers and with membership including chiefs of staff and the head of the General Secretariat's military committee."

As for the date set and the committee established, it appears, at least from the published documents, that no follow-up of the recommendations took place at the 16th summit in Muscat to determine what had come of them.

There were many interesting new elements in the final statement of the latest summit, the 16th. Reference was made for the first time to "information that has become available about the existence of other programs to obtain and develop weapons of mass destruction in the Gulf region." The Council expressed "deep concern about the threat to security in the Gulf region and the entire Middle East that these programs represent."

This reference, which appears to have been aimed at Iran in addition to Israel, adds a new issue to the reservoir of tensions between the GCC as a whole and Iran—above the dispute over the islands and greater than that dispute from the strategic point of view. Some GCC sources say that the party demanding the explicit inclusion of this nuclear issue was Qatar, which on the one hand has good relations with Iran and on the other hand boycotted the final session. The issue will not disappear in the future as easily as some imagine. It will become more critical and shift the dispute with Iran from a bilateral one between Iran and the Emirates—one covered by collective policy—to a strategic dispute with international inputs.

Some of the media hastened to say that the final Muscat statement dealt with the subject of terrorism for the first time. This haste may have been a response to the attention that the statement devoted to the phenomenon. However, a review of the previous statement (21 December 1994) shows that the statement at that time devoted prominent space to what it called the phenomenon of violence and extremism.

The reference was quite clear to the affected parties when the statement used the term "excess" to designate the source of extremism and violence. The Council stated its utter rejection and condemnation of such practices in all their forms on whatever basis. It called for opposing this destructive phenomenon as remote from the spirit of true Islam and incompatible with the tolerance of Islamic law.

The latest statement has added the word "terrorism" to the terminology used on this subject. Adding explicit language to implicit, the Council condemned acts of terrorism of all kinds and forms and referred to two positions it had taken—namely, support for Bahrain's measures to strengthen security and stability and condemnation of the criminal and sinful action that had taken place in Riyadh.

4. The GCC found itself confronting an emergency situation when the delegation of Qatar withdrew from the final session of the 16th summit conference and left Muscat. On the surface, the delegation was protesting the Council's failure to accept Qatar's motion to confirm its candidate as new general secretary to succeed the previous one, or it was objecting on the ground of legal procedure to the appointment of the new general secretary.

One can hear many competing points of view on the issue from observers and insiders. Even if the reason for Qatar's position was a disagreement over the post of general secretary and matters return to normal in the future, Qatar has taken a position on the person himself—a man acknowledged as having a long and distinguished personal and professional record. This will in some way impede his job, which is onerous, difficult, and exhausting to begin with. Although one might praise the Qatari foreign minister's frank remarks on various matters at his subsequent press conference, in the end he made the dispute over the person deeper than it was in the beginning, for he decreed that Qatar would not attend any GCC meeting if the secretary attended in person. Some people present theories about the Qatari position—for example, that the dispute over the person and country of the general secretary is a pretext concealing a dispute over more important issues, it being inconceivable in international relations or in Gulf relations that matters should come to a breach because of a disagreement over the mechanism for choosing a general secretary. The objective analyses become mixed at this point with a certain amount of imagination. Some say it is inconceivable for Qatar to break ranks to sing outside the flock, especially at this time, when dangers are increasing around the region. Where does Qatar have a direct ally? Is it Iran over the sea or beleaguered Iraq? Was Qatar relying on a bigger international ally with the ability to control matters—the United States, for example—in doing what it has done? This analysis adds that the first recognition of Qatar's new ruler came from there. Or is the issue, according to another analysis, that Qatar with its dynamic, young leadership wants to hasten matters it

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considers vital, such as resolving border problems and defining a comprehensive framework for regional and international strategic relations, and has no patience for what it interprets as delay, procrastination, and letting time do its work?

The latter analysis remains unproved, because Qatar's subsequent pronouncements personalized the dispute; they did not move on to content and goals.

The next few days and months will show us the extent to which some of the many conflicting analyses are true and accurate and others astray and far from reality.

What is certain is that there has been an unprecedented shock in GCC relations—an undoubted political shock. With the report that has been published that Kuwait, instead of Qatar, may be the site of the next meeting, the dispute appears to be serious and real. Kuwait is supposed to be the site following Qatar in the rotation of sites for summit meetings.

To conclude on the note with which I began, most of the people in the Gulf still have much hope and little satisfaction with developments. They see the challenges on the horizon and are sad and pained at the inversion of priorities. To all our people in the Gulf we wish goodwill, and from them we can learn patience and expectation!

Kuwait

Minister Supports Iraqi Territorial Integrity

LD2712154695 Kuwait KUNA in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Kuwait City, 27 Dec — Kuwait has today reaffirmed anew its support for Iraq's territorial integrity and the importance of safeguarding Iraqi territory from being torn apart. Shaykh Sabah al-Ahmad, first deputy prime minister and foreign minister, who was on his way to Damascus to participate in the meeting of the 12th session of the foreign ministers of the member states of the Damascus Declaration, emphasized Kuwait's eagerness for Iraq to remain united and cohesive. Shaykh Sabah, who was talking to KUNA, commenting on the calls being made for the establishment of a federal regime in Iraq, said that all statements which have been issued by the GCC [Gulf Cooperation Council] or the Damascus Declaration or Kuwait itself have insisted on the principle that Iraq's territorial integrity should not be violated and that its territory should not be partitioned. On every relevant occasion, the member states of the Damascus Declaration have not hesitated to declare their stance, rejecting any partitioning of Iraq according to any concept or justification — sectarian, racial, or any other — and see in this a key for not only disturbing the security of the region and Arab stability, but a danger to world peace. [passage omitted]

On the other hand, the first deputy prime minister and foreign minister reaffirmed that Kuwait is continuing to apply a primary boycott of Israel in support of the Syrian and Lebanese negotiators in the Middle East peace process. Shaykh Sabah said: "No change has taken place with regard to our stance vis-a-vis the primary boycotting of Israel, and this will continue until we replace it with another decision." [passage omitted]

On another issue, Shaykh Sabah declared that there will be no reduction in the number of UNIKOM [United Nations Iraq-Kuwait Observation Mission] forces, who are observers of the Iraqi-Kuwaiti border. [passage omitted]

Shaykh Sabah pointed out that the issue of the UNIKOM force will remain as it is; it has not been discussed during his meeting today with the UN secretary general.

Saudi Arabia

Yemeni Delegation Arrives To Discuss Border Posts

LD2712132795 Riyadh Saudi Arabian Kingdom Radio Network in Arabic 1130 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Yemeni side to the fourth round [of talks] of the Saudi-Yemeni committee on renewing the border posts between the two countries arrived in Riyadh headed by Dr. Mohamed 'Abd al-Malik al-'Alqi to hold the meetings of the fourth round on renewing the border posts.

Staff Major General Muray' Bin Hasan al-Shahrani, director of the military survey department and head of the Saudi side; members of the Saudi side in the joint committee; and Dr. Muhammad Ahmad al- Kabab, the Yemeni ambassador to the kingdom, were at their reception at King Khalid International Airport. God willing, the joint Saudi-Yemeni committee for renewing the border posts is scheduled to hold the first of its sessions this evening in Riyadh.

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Saddam Wife 'Under House Arrest' After Bid To Flee

NC2712155695 (Clandestine) Voice of Iraqi People in Arabic 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Sources close to Baghdad security and intelligence agencies report that the al-Turaybil border point foiled an attempt by Sajidan Khayrallah Talfah, wife of tyrant Saddam Husayn, to flee the country.

The sources said the attempt was made in late October. They added that Saddam's wife's motorcade passed several control and search points between Baghdad and the [Jordanian] border but failed to cross the al-Turaybil checkpoint. The tyrant gave this checkpoint extensive powers after General Husayn Kamil and his brother and their wives, tyrant Saddam's two daughters, defected to Jordan through the point six months ago.

The tyrant and his wife, Sajidah Khayrallah Talfah, have sharply disagreed since her brother, Staff Lieutenant General 'Adnan Khayrallah Talfah, a former defense minister, was assassinated when his helicopter was blown up. Their disagreement escalated after Saddam took a third wife. This left Sajidah under house arrest in one of her palaces in Baghdad.

Kurdish Radio Urges Military Officers To Defect

NC2712165795 (Clandestine) Voice of the People of Kurdistan in Arabic 1512 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Appeal to the officers of the Iraqi Air Force, pilots, and all zealot officers of the Iraqi Army: O zealot officers of the Iraqi Army, Air Force, and Army Air Force [as heard]: You have seen with your own eyes the dictatorship's crimes and lived through its criminal practices against the Iraqi people, both Arabs and Kurds, as well as other ethnic groups, and against your brothers in the Iraqi Army. Your brothers in Kurdistan call on you to leave the Iraqi regime's ranks and come in your aircraft to Kurdistan. O brother officers of the Air Force and the Army air force, join your brothers in Kurdistan, who will most hospitably and warmly receive you. You will find a safe and secure life for you and your families here.

O brothers, you have been grilled by the fire of the dictatorship and have seen how Saddam Husayn treacherously killed dozens of your brother field commanders in the Army and hundreds of soldiers under the pretext of cowardliness and treason.

The masses of Kurdistan and brave peshmerga are not your enemies but your partners in this homeland, which the Baghdad rulers have devastated through wars and crimes. Join your brothers in Kurdistan and do not link your future with that of murderers and executioners. Major pilot 'Imad Hamad Salman al-Dulaymi has defected to Kurdistan in his French-made helicopter from Squadron 30, which belongs to the Army air force base in Kiwan-Karkuk. He came to Kurdistan and is living here now in esteem and dignity. O brothers of the Air Force officers and Army air force, we call on you to leave the trenches hostile to the people so that you may participate with the Iraqi Arab and Kurdish opposition parties and with the other officers and soldiers who defected from the Iraqi regime's ranks in an attempt to remove the dictatorship from Iraq.

O brothers, it is high time you stood by the people and declared your dissociation from the criminals and murderers. You are most welcome in Kurdistan. May God safeguard our beloved Iraq and protect our people from any misfortune.

Egypt's 'Courageous Stance' Toward Israel Lauded

JN2812113095 Baghdad INA in Arabic 0745 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Baghdad, 28 Dec (INA) — AL-THAWRAH calls for a unified, effective Arab position in support of Egypt's courageous stance that rejects the discussion of any issue before the file of the Zionist nuclear arsenal is opened.

In an article today, the newspaper, which speaks for the Arab Socialist Ba'th Party, welcomes Egypt's renewed stance that calls for Zionist nuclear disarmament. This is a correct national and pan-Arab position. It also underlines the importance of having recourse to principles and to international resolutions and the need to urge the international community to oppose Zionist piracy.

The newspaper adds that Egypt's courageous position — rejecting the discussion of any issue before the file of the Zionist nuclear arsenal is opened — reflects Egypt's insistence that Zionist nuclear weapons be removed and that no security or military issue be discussed with the Zionist entity before the nuclear issue is raised.

AL-THAWRAH underscores the strategic importance of Cairo's position toward pan-Arab security to oppose the U.S.-Zionist ugly policy of blackmail. Keeping the Zionist nuclear arsenal while stripping the Arabs of their modest weapons means that a sword will continue to hang over the heads of the Arabs, leaving them subject to Zionist threats. This is the apex of double standards and bias. This also disregards international resolutions and violates the principle of parallel implementation of these resolutions in the region as a whole.

The paper concludes by urging the international family to stop the use of hateful double standards in dealing

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with similar regional issues. The paper notes that the Zionist entity is treated nicely while Iraq is treated in a vicious, immoral, and inhuman way.

Ambassador Sends UN Letter on U.S. 'Violations'

JN2812090095 Baghdad Republic of Iraq Radio Network in Arabic 2100 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Iraq has asked the UN secretary general to act in accordance with his responsibilities under the UN charter to prevent the recurrence of the violations by U.S. aircraft formations of Iraq's airspace.

In a letter he sent to UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali today, Iraq's Permanent Representative Nizar Hamdum said that a U.S. warplane formation broke the sound barrier for several times over al-Samawah on 14 December, shattering the window glass of civilian houses and buildings.

The ambassador added that a second U.S. warplane formation broke the sound barrier over Umm Qasr on 18 December, after which it flew toward Khawr al-Zubayr Port.

In the letter he asked to be viewed as a UN Security Council document, Ambassador Hamdun said that these U.S. acts of aggression over Iraqi civilian quarters confirm the U.S.intention to maintain tension and instability in the region.

On the same level, Iraq once again protested to the United Nations the U.S. aircraft violation of Iraqi airspace for surveillance and provocation purposes.

In a letter of protest to UN Secretary General Butrus Butrus-Ghali today, Nizar Hamdun, Iraq's permanent representative to the United Nations, said that the U.S. aircraft from 1 to 10 December 1995 continued to carry out provocative reconnaissance sorties over Iraq's northern and southern areas, after which they left for Kuwait.

Ambassador Nizar Hamdun asked that his letter containing a detailed list of all these sorties be considered as a UN Security Council document and that the UN Security Council members be informed of these regrettable facts which violate Iraq's sovereignty and security.

RCC Issues New National Assembly Law

JN2712192895 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 27 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report]

[FBIS Translated Text] The Revolution Command Council [RCC] issued today a new law for the National Assembly No. 26 for 1995.

The law was issued in implementation of directives by leader President Saddam Husayn, may God protect him, to promote the democratic march and entrench the constitutional establishments, since the National Assembly represents a basic pillar in this structure and represents in a magnificent manner all meanings of popular participation and its values that have been entrenched by Saddam's glorious al-Qadisiyah battle [Iraq-Iran war] and the immortal Mother of Battles.

The existence and march of the National Assembly has expressed the principle of equality between citizens without discrimination based on religious or ethnic considerations, and without allowing private property or social or political influence be a means to reaching the assembly.

The Assembly was formed 15 years ago, when Iraq made advanced steps, thanks to its historic leadership, along the road of democratic construction. This democratic construction was crowned on 15 October 1995 when the great people of Iraq expressed their commitment to their principles and full loyalty to their leader President Saddam Husayn through the great popular referendum. The referendem entrenched the momentum of democratic legitimacy and gave it its widest human and principled meaning.

The law consists of 91 articles over five chapters that deal with the makeup of the National Assembly, its election, and its legislative, monitoring, consultative, and organizational duties, and the functioning of the assembly.

This law, which was issued after the issuance a few days ago of the Local People's Councils Law, has come as a magnificent crowning of the democratic march and philosophy that are based on the thought of leader President Saddam Husayn.

Saddam Chairs Cabinet's Session, Speaks on Economy

JN2712201295 Baghdad Iraq Television Network in Arabic 1800 GMT 27 Dec 95

[Announcer-read report over video]

[FBIS Translated Text] Leader President Saddam Husayn, may God preserve him, said that while our economic policy achieves additional revenues to increase the quantity of paid-for supplies, production, and services, it should not only focus on reducing costs but also on avoiding unemployment, because any form of unemployment leads to social problems and wastes human energy.

His excellency also said: If we want an advanced social system for economic and development returns and for

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fair social returns, we should abandon the policy of making economic profit alone at the expense of social and moral profit and we should closely link these revenues so that activity in any of them will stimulate the other's activity in the right direction.

The most important feature of this concept, he said, is an attempt to introduce and apply immediate incentives linking the quantity and the level of production and services with the personal return. Such incentives achieve several objectives at one time. In addition to increasing and improving production and services and also increasing the returns of employees with limited incomes, these incentives promote the concept of legal means of living and a sense of peace of mind and justice and stimulate the desire for serious, fruitful work and competition toward better performance. This came in an important statement by the leader president, may God preserve him, when he chaired the 45th session of the Council of Ministers.

After lengthy discussions during the session, his excellency said: Controlling and following up work and activities; curbing every loose behavior and view in light of the goals of the economic, socialist, and social policy of the state; continuing to assess the secondary results compared to basic ones and immediately rectifying any deviation from them; and not following the easy administrative decisions, which ignore people's considerations or needs, will all result in the least losses and in the largest revenues.

The Council of Ministers then discussed the amended cost of the leader's project of fulfillment, which will supply drinking water to the city of al-Basrah; another project for improving and maintaining water distribution networks in the city; and other affiliated projects. The council decided to allocate the required amounts of money to carry out these two large projects, although allocations for the 1996 investment policy have been frozen for some time. But the city of cities, which stood fast bravely during the glorious Saddam's al-Qadisiyah battle [Against Iranian Forces] and during the military aggression in the eternal Mother of Battles will be provided with the required financial allocations. Therefore, the council decided to impose financial fees on certain activities to enable the Iraqis to contribute to the city of cities by financing these projects.

The Council of Ministers also acquainted itself with the results of the leader's 7 August 1995 call on the ministries to restore equipment, machinery, systems, apparatuses, and furniture within two months. The Council of Ministers welcomed the achievements and the spirit with which the activities of the Iraqis were stimulated. It also discussed other topics on its agenda and made necessary decisions.

Barzan al-Tikriti on Regional, Domestic Issues

MM2812113695 London AL-HAYAH in Arabic 23 Dec 95 pp 1,6

[Report on interview with Barzan al-Tikriti, permanent representative at the UN Geneva headquarters, by the chief editor in Geneva; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Text] Barzan al-Tikriti, Iraqi permanent representative to the UN European headquarters in Geneva, has stated that he expects the new year in Iraq to be a year of major decisions and steps which would follow and complement the step of the presidential referendum.

Al-Tikriti affirmed that there will be no rupture with Jordan despite King Husayn's sponsoring of an Iraqi opposition conference. He welcomed the chance of an improvement in the climate between Iraq and Syria, and expressed his hope that the Kurds would sign an agreement with the Iraqi Government in Baghdad prior to the lifting of the [UN] sanctions on Iraq rather than after it. He said he is confident that had it not been for the American pressure on the Kurds, there would have been no problem that would prevent the conclusion of such an agreement.

Al-Tikriti was speaking in an interview with AL-HAYAH's chief editor at his [al-Tikriti's] office in Geneva. He said that President Saddam Husayn is neither a tribal chief nor a shaykh of a sect, but a politician who is fully aware of the changes that have taken place in the world and the region and will deal with them in a manner that would serve the Iraqi people, the region, and the world at large. For this reason, it can be assumed that the coming year will be one of major decisions and steps that would follow and complement the presidential referendum step.

Asked to elaborate, Al-Tikriti said that following the defection of Husayn Kamil (Saddam Husayn's son-in-law) to Jordan, certain measures were taken internally and the powers of some people in the institutions attached to the Ministry of Industry (whose portfolio Husayn Kamil had held) were reduced and restored to their logical places. Furthermore, the ministers of the interior and defense and the chief of public security were changed.

Al-Tikriti asked: What would these measures mean, if not that there is an intention to pursue a policy aimed at building a state of law and institutions and investing responsibilities in accordance with capabilities, experience, and specialization, and not of nepotism?

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[AL-HAYAH] Will this include 'Udayy Saddam Husayn?

[Al-Tikriti] I have no details about this, although the press had reported it. [Al-Tikriti ends]

Al-Tikriti added that next month will witness elections to the National Assembly, which he believes will differ, it can be assumed, from past elections in respect to the way they are run and the type of candidates, as this will cover all sections of the people, so that there will be representatives of vocational and popular sectors as well as tribes, men of religion, professionals, minorities, experts, and university professors. There will also be a reasonable representation of women and people of good caliber.

[AL-HAYAH] Is there any inclination to appoint a liberal prime minister such as Sa'dun Hammadi?

[Al-Tikriti] I personally have not heard anything of this sort...perhaps, following the National Assembly elections, a new cabinet will be formed. However, what is important is the separation of powers and the allotment of their jurisdictions and authorities in accordance with the [provisions of the] permanent Constitution pertaining to the rights and duties of institutions and individuals. What matters is not whether there is a liberal prime minister or not, but that he is capable of leadership, possesses abilities, and is versed in matters of regional and international politics and management skills...so the prime minister could be Sa'dun Hammadi or anybody else. There are scores like him in Iraq. However, I have no knowledge about this matter nor does it fall within my jurisdiction. It is only my interest in what is happening that prompts me to analyze matters in this manner.

[AL-HAYAH] What information do you have about King Husayn's initiative and contacts with the Iraqi opposition and his intention to invite its leaders to a meeting in Amman? To what extent has this initiative harmed Iraqi-Jordanian relations? Do you think that matters will end in a rupture between the two countries?

[Al-Tikriti] I do not believe that the problems and the disturbing events that have taken place are sufficient to cause a rupture. Relations between Jordan and Iraq and between the two Iraqi and Jordanian peoples have reached such a degree of entwined interests that it would be difficult to retract. The future interests and relations are much wider than the opposition meeting.

[AL-HAYAH] But what were the motives that prompted King Husayn to hold an Iraqi opposition meeting in Amman?

[Al-Tikriti] Frankly, I do not know and I do not want to know.

[AL-HAYAH] Do you expect the meeting to produce any results?

[Al-Tikriti] So far, no date has been fixed for the meeting, and I have not heard of any agreement about it among the parties concerned. The matter has not yet been settled. There are two problems facing the meeting: The first is that the opposition parties, with all their sections, reject the presence of Husayn Kamil and he himself does not accept to be a partner. It seems so far he has not lost his obsession with power and so he wants to be the leader of these groups which operate under his umbrella. But the opposition refuses to accept this; they have their reasons and their views about Husayn Kamil, his ethics, his background, his capabilities, and his mentality. The second problem is that of Ahmad al-Jalabi [leader of Unified Iraqi National Congress] who is wanted by the Jordanian judiciary in connection with the Petra Bank case. How can he enter Jordan where he is a wanted man? Will his case be settled by the promulgation of a special law or as an exceptional case or by pardon? Will it be settled prior to the proposed meeting in January? There is nothing but general talk about a meeting which embraces parties of differing motives, objectives, and inclinations and includes people whose role will end once the problem is resolved. [al-Tikriti ends]

Al-Tikriti then stressed that Iraq is capable of resolving its problems by itself, adding "if the Arabs fail to help Iraq, then at least let them not interfere in its own affairs, for as the saying goes, the people of Mecca know its lanes better than others. We are more familiar with our own problems."

He affirmed that the Iraqi Government has been implementing all the UN Security Council's resolutions and that it is prepared to enter into a dialogue with Arabs and non-Arabs alike. But if there is a determination to topple the regime, then it is ready to fight and defend itself until the end. He said that he does not believe that the Iraqi opposition parties want to fight to the death, because they want to rule, and consequently they will not be able to topple the government. It is for this reason that they go begging to the United States. But Iraq has not bombed any American city and has not taken 5,000 Americans as hostages to deserve any severe response from the U.S. Government.

Al-Tikriti added: "The United States has previously waged war against Iraq under cover of Iraq's presence in Kuwait and the UN resolutions. But now there is no longer any reason or justification for waging war on Iraq, particularly as the Iraqi Government is determined

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not to give any justification or pretext to the others. But if fighting is imposed on Iraq, then it will defend itself. The saying goes: 10 years of negotiations but not one day of war."

[AL-HAYAH] Why did the Iraqi Government not think of this before entering Kuwait?

[Al-Tikriti] There were circumstances at the time. [al-Tikriti ends]

Al-Tikriti stressed that the United States will not be able to establish an alternative leadership [for Iraq], particularly through the intelligence service, since the intelligence service has relations with less important people who cannot rule a state. But strategic relations can be built through political institutions such as the Foreign Ministry. He added that Iraq has repeatedly expressed its readiness to close the past chapter and open a new chapter.... He asked why the Americans do not initiate a dialogue with the Iraqi Government, adding that Iraq has asked leaders of some Arab countries to convey this desire of Iraq to the United States, but they seem to have failed to get a response.

[AL-HAYAH] Is there anything new in Iraqi-Syrian relations?

[Al-Tikriti] The two countries complement each other politically and economically. Rapprochement should take place for the sake of the two peoples as well as the region, without this rapprochement being directed against any [third] party. Climates for change are developing between the two countries caused by the climates of change that are sweeping the region. If Syria were to show readiness, then Iraq is ready.

[AL-HAYAH] We have reports that you have made contacts with Kurdish quarters during the past months. What is the nature of these contacts and what are their objectives?

[Al-Tikriti] We know all the leaderships of the Kurds and we have personal and family contacts with them. But the Kurds do not possess the decisionmaking freedom to sign an agreement with the government in Baghdad. There was an agreement between the Kurds and the government (March-August 1992). An agreement was concluded and the Kurdish leaders went to the north to discuss it but they did not return. They sent word saying that they were prevented from signing the agreement.

[AL-HAYAH] But who prevented them?

[Al-Tikriti] The West. It told them that concluding an agreement with the Iraqi Government will help it [the Iraqi Government], and so how can we help you if you help Iraq. I believe that had it not been for the pressure of the West and some other quarters, the Kurds would have signed an agreement with the Iraqi Government a long time ago. I believe that the government is prepared to welcome them. I wish they would sign an agreement with the government prior to the lifting of the siege and not after it, because this would be a credit [word published in English] to them and then they can say: We signed an agreement with Iraq while it was under siege and we did this not out of despair or hope of getting something. This would strengthen their position vis-a-vis the chauvinists.

[AL-HAYAH] Have you personally tried to contact them?

[Al-Tikriti] I have not been asked to contact the Kurds, and as for those who contacted me, I conveyed what they told me to Baghdad, whose response was positive. They contacted me in March 1991 and asked to go to Baghdad. I told them you have chosen the appropriate time...contacts have continued every now and then since that time and all Baghdad's responses have been positive.

[AL-HAYAH] Why do you not visit Iraq? As long as you continue not to do so, questions will continually be raised.

[Al-Tikriti] I am an ambassador in Geneva. I am not a member of the party leadership or the Revolutionary Command Council. I have not left a post there so that I may return to it and join in dialogues...my work is here. If I am recalled in connection with my work, I would say yes. But if they tell me "Come, we miss you," I would say no.

[AL-HAYAH] It is unanimously accepted that the Iraqi people have become the victims of the international siege. Yet on the other hand, the regime continues to spend money lavishly on itself and on the establishment of unnecessary projects such as the building of palaces, the highest tower in the Middle East, a two-tier bridge, and so on and so forth. How can the regime reconcile its complaint about the siege and its squandering of money?

[Al-Tikriti] A palace or a bridge or the like cannot feed a people. Iraq is a big country, and I confess to you as an Iraqi that the people of Iraq are spending people, being used to living in a country of abundance and not having known poverty. The squandering of money is actually the by-product of upbringing and habit.

It might be economically feasible to build bridges. But the cause of the squandering was basically Husayn Kamil. He had a plan to harm Iraq. He took control of 72 percent of Iraq's economy and revenue and spent the money on useless projects such as the building of a plant for which there were no raw materials to operate it. He

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was behind the minting of currency and the squandering of money which led to inflation and the existence of billions of dinars printed on poor quality paper with poor quality printing which made it easy to forge money. [al-Tikriti ends]

Al-Tikriti then launched a severe attack on Husayn Kamil and said that the siege on Iraq was an exceptional case, while the natural case was the establishment of good relations with all world countries including the United States.

"Nobody expected the siege to continue for so long, particularly after Husayn Kamil's defection and his revelation of information he had kept secret from the government — although it was stated that it was Iraq that concealed this information, it transpired later that it was Husayn Kamil himself who had taken the decision [to conceal it]. The [UN] Security Council can verify this fact from the cadres whom Husayn Kamil had prevented from revealing these secrets. Thus whenever Husayn Kamil used to issue a directive the people considered it as having been issued by the president and the officials used to take this (for granted) [two preceding words in English and in brackets] and feared his tyranny. Husayn Kamil used to issue instructions to the ministers prior to the meeting of the cabinet giving them the impression that they were on the president's orders, and so ensured that none of them could veto any decision...and now he calls for the nonabolition of the food rationing, although when he was in a position of responsibility he wrote a memorandum to the president calling for its abolition, in the face of strong opposition from the minister of commerce."

Al-Tikriti concluded his statements by saying: "Prior to recent events, relations between Iraq and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia were strong at both the official and popular levels, and relations between the leaders and officials of the two countries were a model for others to emulate in terms of continued consultations and contacts and coordination in all fields, a fact which had a positive effect on the two countries and on the security and stability of the region under critical and sensitive conditions which we all remember.

"I recall in this respect the words uttered by the late King 'Abd-al-'Aziz Al Sa'ud 50 years ago: Good comes from Iraq and evil comes from Iraq. I believe these words continue to hold true to this day. For this reason, we Iraqis and Saudis should place these words before our eyes and act accordingly.... As far as Iraq is concerned, I have previously carried messages from President Saddam Husayn to one of the leaders of the fraternal Arab countries (Morocco) which centered on Iraq's desire and readiness to open a new chapter with everybody. Undoubtedly the return of matters to their natural course will bear fruit to both countries [Iraq and Saudi Arabia] and to the region, while the continuation of the situation as it is will have negative consequences for all, particularly as advocating the continuation of the siege and the prolongation of the Iraqi people's suffering will only lead to further estrangement and perhaps even abomination and mounting grudges. There are quarters who try to promote this state of affairs to serve their own interests and ensure that they are reflected in future generations and the future of relations between the peoples of the two countries and the region."

Paper Reports on Reconstruction of Oil Tanks

JN2712135695 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 10 Dec 95 p 4

[Report by 'Ali al-Zayadi]

[FBIS Translated Text] Al-Qadisiyah — Oil Ministry teams working on a project for the Oil Projects Company to improve the storage capacity of the oil sector have made large savings in hard currency by building oil tanks of different storage capacities under world specifications. Al-Diwaniyah project site manager Engineer Jihad Kazim 'Abd-al-'Abbas said: Our skilled technical teams have undertaken the reconstruction and rebuilding of a large number of oil tanks which were targets of enemy raids during the 30-state aggression.

The manager added: Our teams, through Iraqi prudence, have managed to build a large number of these tanks, including two 5-million liter tanks for gas oil and a third 10-million liter tank now under construction for crude oil, within the set period of three months. Thus, Iraq has become one of the countries which produce such tanks.

The manager explained: Since the beginning of the reconstruction phase, our teams have managed to build 22 tanks of different capacities under world specifications, thus enabling Iraq to pump a maximum quantity of oil once the embargo on our country is lifted.

Housing Ministry Company Carries Out 30 Projects

JN2712140795 Baghdad AL-THAWRAH in Arabic 11 Dec 95 p 4

[FBIS Translated Text] The technical and engineering teams of al-Anfal Company, which belongs to the Ministry of Housing and Reconstruction, this year carried out 30 projects within the campaign of reconstructing and rebuilding Iraq at a cost of 500,000,000 dinars.

Making this announcement, company Manager Talal Husayn said the projects include 8 irrigation projects involving more than 2 million cubic meters of excavation work and about 2.5 million cubic meters of filling

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up work, 11 projects involving bridges and aqueducts, and 10 projects of roads between the country's governorates.

The manager added that company teams are currently carrying out eight other projects involving the building of aqueducts and the maintenance of roads and bridges. He said that work will begin soon to carry out other projects, including aqueducts in Wadi al-Rawkah, maintenance of al-Qa'im-'Akashat road, and dredging of Diyala River course.

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Beilin Notes 'Good Atmosphere' at U.S. Talks

TA2812080695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 0505 GMT 28 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with Economy and Planning Minister Yosi Beilin by Arye Golan; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [Golan] Minister Beilin, when you meet the prime minister in his office this morning will you tell him that it is necessary to visit the Golan Heights and meet the settlers there?

[Beilin] I do not think this is currently a problem on the agenda and I do not think there is a shortage of visits to the Golan Heights. All of us pay visits to the place and meet the settlers there. The problem facing us is where the negotiations are heading, and I believe we will have an answer to this upon the completion of the two brief rounds of talks in the United States.

[Golan] You know, of course, that the negotiations with Syria have often commenced with great fanfare only to die with a whimper several days later. Do you believe that this time things will be different, seeing as, at least based on what correspondents report, there is a good and positive atmosphere in the talks? Have you received a similar report from Uri Savir?

[Beilin] Yes. There is certainly a good atmosphere in these talks. I would say that three significant changes have taken place here: One, Syrian media is raising expectations and is using an unprecedentedly positive tone in referring to these talks. Two, our people sense that the Syrian delegation to the talks arrived with a broader mandate than it has had in previous talks. The third thing is the U.S. willingness to get substantially involved in these talks. In fact we are dealing here with a three-way move, and so much the better. It is still impossible to say if all of these factors will lead to a real breakthrough in the talks. We will be able to judge this only when the delegations start dealing with the most crucial issues, namely, the depth of the withdrawal and the depth of peace. This problem has accompanied us since the talks began in October 1991.

[Golan] MA'ARIV carries a very interesting headline today referring to the issue of active U.S. involvement. The newspaper's correspondent in Washington reports that the United States is considering the offer of a compromise on the withdrawal line. This will apparently be the first U.S. bridging proposal, namely, some line between the 4 June 1967 border and the international border.

[Beilin] Look, since we said that from a procedural point of view we do not have any preconditions I would not reject such an option out of hand. Naturally, it does not bind us. If there is a proposal we can live with — and I do not know if this is similar to what you mentioned here, namely, some line between these two border lines....

[Golan, interrupting] It is only logical that the proposal refer to some line between these two border lines.

[Beilin] I wish logic had a more prominent place in our negotiations with Syria. Were that the case, it is possible that today we would already be in a state of peace. Unfortunately logic has been on some sort of strike for a very long period over there. The question is whether it will become more prominent now, whether we are proceeding toward an arrangement, whether the U.S. proposals are realistic and whether we can live with them. All these questions are still premature, because at this point we can only talk about a positive atmosphere and our perception that their delegation has received a mandate to conduct serious negotiations. We are still very far from knowing the details.

[Golan] Will this round of talks at the Wye Plantation end with some sort of joint Israeli-Syrian statement?

[Beilin] It has still not been decided whether there will be such a concluding statement, but it is not inconceivable. [passage omitted]

[Golan] So we are all waiting now for the results of this three- day round of talks.

[Beilin] Yes. I think this will certainly give us a clue as to where we are heading to. I am not convinced, however, that these three days will suffice. If you ask me, I believe that these three days, the ensuing consultations in Israel, the next round of three- day talks, and Christopher's subsequent visit — that is, the entire move which will end in mid-January — will tell us where we are really standing.

Baraq Comments on Wye Plantation Talks

TA2812121395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1005 GMT 28 Dec 95

[Telephone interview with Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq by anchor David Gilbo'a and political correspondent Shlomo Raz; place not given — live]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Gilbo'a] Can we say that beyond the positive atmosphere — which is an important thing in itself in the talks between us and Syria — substantial progress will be achieved by the end of the first round?

[Baraq] Last night, between 0200 and 0300, I held a very long talk with Uri Savir. I believe that the nature of these negotiations and the great importance attributed to them by both sides obligate us to honor the promise

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of secrecy we gave the Syrians, just as they promised us. This will help the negotiations. The atmosphere is indeed good and the businesslike discussions are also being held in a positive manner. I believe that the next few days will enable us to map in a general way the positions of the sides regarding the issues which are currently on the agenda, beyond procedural issues — whether this will happen in this round or the second round. I believe that after these two rounds, when this move is completed with Christopher's arrival, we will be able to assess the situation — and this seems to me to be the most important thing.

[Raz] What is your assessment at this stage, what direction are the talks taking? After all, we do not have to wait until Christopher arrives because we already have indications.

[Baraq] To repeat, I am very concerned with preserving the secrecy of our dialogue with Syria. I would not like to divulge details from the dialogue itself. For us the main question, however, is to what extent the Syrians are amenable to full normalization and to appropriate security arrangements. Our formula is that our withdrawal will depend on the depth of peace and the strength of the security arrangements.

[Gilbo'a] Can you understand the nervousness shown by the Golan settlers, as evinced by their massive demonstration against the withdrawal yesterday? Do they correctly perceive an imminent withdrawal?

[Baraq] Look, I think we can expect a lengthy negotiating process that will involve complicated and perhaps even difficult decisions. I do not believe this thing is going to be wrapped up in several weeks.

In fact, the dialogue going on within Israeli society, including the political dialogue, is legitimate. People should and ought to express their opinions, because these are the rules of the game. I do not think anything will be decided in the next few days, but I believe they correctly understand that Israel — out of a position of strength and self-confidence — is examining whether it is possible to reach such a peace agreement with Syria which may be followed by a peace agreement with Lebanon and which may also bring more countries from North Africa and the Persian Gulf. In practical terms, this move has a potential of putting an end to our wars, but nobody knows whether this will actually happen. Perhaps the Syrians will not budge. If it transpires that it is impossible to attain this in conditions which are wise and responsible in terms of our security, then unfortunately there will be no agreement.

[Raz] Minister Baraq, in your last meeting with Christopher in Jerusalem the secretary said the Americans will come up with their own proposals if the sides are open to such proposals. Have the Americans submitted their own proposal?

[Baraq] Look, there is no room for American proposals before the two sides have mapped the issues and before the negotiations between the two sides bring them somewhat closer, to a point where there will be some kind of chance to bridge the gaps. Seeing that the issues are extremely complicated and interrelated I think the Americans at this stage are mainly helping by way of being attentive and helping the sides form a sense of intimacy and openness. I do not think we need American proposals at this stage. I also do not want to create any illusions that within several days we will know whether there is an agreement with Syria. In my opinion this is a longer process.

Baraq: Nuclear Issue Addressed Only After Peace

TA2712132795 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1300 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq says Israel will agree to discuss the nuclear issue only after a comprehensive peace is achieved, including with Iran. The foreign minister made these remarks in a meeting with National Religious Party [NRP] members. Baraq reiterated that his remarks do not constitute an Israeli confirmation that it possesses nuclear weapons.

Our party affairs correspondent Yaron Deqel reports that Baraq urged the NRP to support the government from the outside, seeing that this is a government that has been established in the wake of an assassination. The foreign minister said that the NRP's support for the government will open the way for bipartisan cooperation after the elections as well.

Baraq on Golan Withdrawal, al-Asad, Nuclear Talks

TA2712162595 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[Report by party affairs correspondent Netan'el Semrik]

[FBIS Translated Text] Several observations made by Foreign Minister Ehud Baraq at a closed political meeting today illustrated the climate in Israel on the eve of the resumption of the talks with Syria.

The foremost question is where the future border will lie. Ehud Baraq said today that he hopes Israel will not evacuate the Golan all the way to the Sea of Galilee, although he pointed out: The IDF [Israel Defense Forces] will have to draft scenarios for a possible decision by the political echelons to withdraw from 50, or 70, or 80, or even 98 percent of the Golan Heights.

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Baraq further pointed out that Israel will seek to avoid falling into what he termed the Syrian trap by announcing its territorial concessions on the Golan prior to obtaining a clear Syrian statement on the substance of peace. Baraq added, however, that by not resuming the talks, Israel would be providing al-Asad with an opportunity to avoid giving clear answers.

Ehud Baraq, a former chief of the IDF Intelligence Branch, today tried to divine the workings of al-Asad's mind. He explained to the NRP [National Religious Party] Political Secretariat that Hafiz al- Asad has three fears. The first is that the 'Alawi minority, to which he belongs, will again become the Syrian nation's menial workers, as they had been in the 1950's. The second fear, according to Baraq, is of the Ceausescu precedent: Al-Asad is afraid that he too will be ousted if he allows normalization with Israel, that if he opens a window to admit a pleasant Western wind, he will be admitting a typhoon that will rob him of his country. In Baraq's imagery, the typhoon represents the thousands of Israeli tourists who will be swamping Damascus. The third fear, the foreign minister explained, is that an ideological metamorphosis of the economically feeble Syria will cause it to lose its standing in the Arab world.

Referring to the nuclear issue, the foreign minister said: If Israel attains peace accords and security guarantees with all the Arab countries, including Iran, a discussion of nuclear weapons in the Middle East will also be feasible.

Dayan, Egypt's Basyuni on Syria Talks, Yemen

TA2712133395 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Deputy Foreign Minister Eli Dayan says that no maps will be drawn and there will be no border discussions in the talks between Israel and Syria. Mr. Dayan made these comments after a meeting with Egyptian Ambassador Muhammad Basyuni at his office in Jerusalem. Our correspondent Shlomo Raz reports that Deputy Minister Dayan expressed dissatisfaction over the fact that Egyptian papers have been writing that Israel is involved in the conflict between Yemen and Eritrea over several islands. He claimed that these reports are slanderous.

Amb. Basyuni said that this is the first time in the Israeli-Syrian negotiations that the two sides are serious and flexible. Our English Department correspondent Idele Ross notes that Basyuni has served in the past as Egypt's military attache in Damascus.

Peres Concerned About Elections in Turkey

TA2712165395 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal]

[FBIS Translated Text] The prime minister today made the first public statement regarding the Israeli apprehension about the effect of the Turkish elections on the ties between the two countries and on stability in the region. The Turkish Islamic party received 20 percent of the votes, thereby mustering a relative majority vis-a-vis the two secular parties.

[Begin Peres recording] Of course, we are monitoring with concern the rise of the fundamentalist sector in Turkey. We hope, however, that Turkey will remain a secular state in the tradition of Ataturk. We all hope Turkey will not go backward. [end recording]

The election results are not unequivocal, Peres noted, adding that the two secular parties were planning to unite in a coalition. They have even asked Israel for a copy of the Peres-Shamir rotation agreement, which was the basis of the national unity government in 1984. Peres added that Turkey was admitted to the EC recently, and it cannot be both fundamentalist and an EC member.

The man sitting next to Peres as he was making these remarks was the president of Kazakhstan, the second country Israel views as a buffer against Iranian fundamentalism.

[Nursultan Nazarbayev, in Russian followed by Segal's translation] No Turkish party can form a government alone, and we hope the coalition that is eventually formed will benefit the country, Kazakhstani President Nursultan Nazarbayev says. Referring to the Iran issue, the president stressed: Like you, we are worried about Iranian fundamentalism, but contrary to Peres' approach, we believe that vociferous public statements will do no good. I continue meeting with Iranian President Rafsanjani to find out what really goes on in Iran.

Officers Comment as IDF Leaves Ramallah

TA2712142695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1400 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The city of Ramallah was handed over by IDF [Israel Defense Forces] officers to Palestinian Police officers approximately one hour ago. The last IDF soldiers have left the city. Major General Gabi Ofir, commander of the IDF forces in Judaea and Samaria, wished Gen. al-Hajj Isma'il, commander of the Palestinian security forces in the West Bank, success in maintaining security, including that of the Israeli settlers in the nearby settlements.

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Gen. Isma'il promised to abide by all the clauses of the peace agreement and to maintain good-neighbor relations. Our correspondent Dani Zaqen reports that most of the Palestinian policemen arrived in Ramallah last night. The last convoy arrived at 1500 this afternoon.

Officer: IDF Paper on Palestinian Police Outdated

TA2712130695 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in Hebrew 1200 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Major General Gabi Ofir, commander of the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] in the West Bank, says the brochure that stipulates how IDF soldiers should behave toward Palestinian policemen was written approximately a year ago and gave vent to feelings accrued in a difficult period in the Gaza Strip. Since that time the Oslo A accord has been signed, and a profound psychological change has taken place in everything relating to our attitude toward the Palestinians and to cooperation with them. Maj. Gen. Ofir made these remarks to Qol Yisra'el. [passage omitted]

The Council of Jewish Settlements in Judaea, Samaria, and Gaza says the political echelon ought to examine whether it is not endangering the lives of Israeli citizens by giving weapons to people who are trigger-happy and to Palestinian policemen who operate in gangs.

Dr. Ahmad al-Tibi regrets the fact that an official IDF document includes expressions that reek of prejudice against the Palestinian Police. He expressed the hope that the IDF will initiate an up-to- date brochure which will express the real mutual relations that currently exist between the IDF and the Palestinian Police.

A senior Palestinian officer told our correspondent Dani Zaqen that in his opinion the brochure was initiated by a petty IDF officer, because senior Israeli officers are full of praise for the Palestinian policemen's performance.

Release of 24 Palestinian Prisoners Approved

TA2712173895 Tel Aviv IDF Radio in Hebrew 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[Report by political correspondent Udi Segal]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] In the second round of Palestinian prisoner release, Israel will also free prisoners convicted of murdering collaborators. A decision in this spirit was made at a meeting of the ministerial committee on prisoners, which convened at Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' bureau this morning. Major General Eytan Ben-Eliyahu, the IDF [Israel Defense Forces] representative in the committee, informed the committee at one of its previous sessions that according to the current criteria, the release of 1,100 prisoners — the number pledged by Israel in the interim agreement — is unfeasible. Peres decided to bend the criteria somewhat, and the Shin Bet, the Prison Service, and the IDF have consequently been reviewing the dossiers of prisoners convicted of murdering collaborators. Minister Yosi Sarid, ministerial committee member:

[Begin Sarid recording] In any event, they will not be released, but rather handed over to the Palestinian Authority [PA] — and the PA will be the one to take steps as it sees fit. [end recording]

Israel knows, of course, that the PA will set the murderers free and not keep them incarcerated, particularly in view of the fact that, under 'Arafat's rule, Jibril al-Rujub continues to persecute and murder anyone he suspects of assisting Israel.

Israel will release a total of 1,100 prisoners by the end of next week, including 24 criminal murderers, who will be moved from the Hebron jail — which is about to be closed down — to a Palestinian prison.

Cabinet ministers today criticized Shim'on Peres for, among other things, agreeing to increase the number of Palestinian Council members from 83 to 88 without bringing the matter up for cabinet approval. Peres informed the ministerial political forum of the matter, but did not ask for the cabinet's approval of this change in the Oslo B accord.

Peres To Establish 10-Member Security Cabinet

TA2812080995 Jerusalem Qol Yisra'el in English 0500 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Prime Minister Peres has decided to set up a security cabinet along the lines that existed in the government of the late Prime Minister Yitzhaq Rabin. There will be 10 members. Ministers David Liba'i and Yosi Beilin will join the security cabinet as observers. A Qol Yisra'el reporter adds that the prime minister plans to demand that members of the security cabinet sign a secrecy agreement.

'Ultra-Orthodox' Weekly Resumes Publication

TA2812114995 Tel Aviv HA'ARETZ in Hebrew 28 Dec 95 p A7

[Report by Shahar Ilan]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The weekly ultra-Orthodox newspaper HASHAVU'A [THE WEEK], which was shut down a month ago due to a dispute between its editor and publisher over its extreme nationalistic line, was again published last week under a new name — KOL HASHAVU'A [THE WHOLE WEEK]. A source affiliated with the paper said that the name was changed

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to prevent it from being closed due to the numerous allegations of instigation and agitation raised against it in the past. According to the source, editor Asher Zuckerman, who leads the extremist line, found a new sponsor whose name he would not reveal.

In the first edition of KOL HASHAVU'A, Zuckerman announces: "The paper's line will not change and there is no reason it should." And indeed, it continued attacking Yitzhaq Rabin. The paper cites an unnamed rabbi who said that Rabin took part in the attack on the survivors of the Altalena [Irgun's arms ship that was shelled by the army in 1948], saying that "a murderer will be a murderer." The newspaper says that Yig'al 'Amir's "very bright" court appearance was very impressive, and that his university professor was overwhelmed with admiration for him. [passage omitted]

A month ago, Attorney General Mikha'el Ben Ya'ir instructed the police to launch an investigation against the paper, and the investigation has started recently. [passage omitted]

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Al-Kabariti on Seized Chemical Material, Machine

JN2812121695 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Dec 95 pp 1, 16

[FBIS Translated Text] REUTER, Amman—REUTER cites Jordanian Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti as saying yesterday that Jordan seized dangerous chemical material and a sophisticated programmed milling machine to produce missile parts bound for Iraq in violation of the imposed UN sanctions.

Al-Kabariti told REUTER: A large amount of chemical material prepared for shipment to Iraq was seized. It consists of very toxic and cancerous material that was imported for re-export to Iraq as pesticides.

In addition to this, Jordanian authorities seized over the past weeks a computerized milling machine that was imported by a front company working for Iraq which operates from Jordan.

Al-Kabariti added: The machine was imported as separate parts for Jordanian milling machines, but they are used to make weapons and missile parts.

Al-Kabariti said: The accelerated pace of interception of these goods over the past period was made possible by the huge amount of documents the Iraqi authorities handed over to the UN Special Commission overseeing the elimination of Iraq's weapons under Rolf Ekeus following the desertion of Husayn Kamil Hasan last August.

Al-Kabariti said: It is obvious that many of the tonnes of documents handed to the UN committee were not cleared by the Iraqi Government, and so disclosed the names of all the parties and companies cooperating with Iraq.

Al-Kabariti added that Jordan is adopting strict measures in light of recent developments concerning companies registered in Jordan which work as a front for importing banned goods to Iraq. He said Jordan is currently investigating the activities of many businesses operating as front companies which were found to be registered in Jordan but operating in the interest of Iraqi parties for importing material banned under the UN embargo imposed on Iraq.

Sources said Tuesday [26 December] that Jordan seized a consignment of chemical material on its way to Iraq and that acids and very toxic chemical material were concealed in a shipment of drugs exported by a Jordanian pharmaceutical company to Iraq.

The sources said the consignment, weighing several kilos, was seized recently, but did not give a specific date or elaborate on the nature of the goods that were seized.

Medicines and humanitarian goods are exempt from a stringent economic embargo the United Nations imposed on Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait in 1990.

The sources said that the seized goods were discovered by the Jordanian customs officials after tight controls were imposed on goods being shipped to Iraq.

Al-Kabariti Denies Intention To Close Iraq Border

JN2712122195 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 27 Dec 95 pp 1, 20

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Doha, Amman—QNA, AFP—Foreign Minister 'Abd-al-Karim al-Kabariti has asserted that Jordan has no intention of closing its borders with Iraq following the discovery at Amman airport of a military shipment that was bound for Iraq. He said Jordan does not subject its borders and its economic and popular relations to political positions.

In a statement to the Qatari newspaper AL-RAYAH published yesterday, al-Kabariti denied that there is a proposal for a federation with Iraq. He explained that there could be a proposal on federation inside Iraq in a way that secures Iraq's territorial integrity and national unity. He said that the final constitutional framework in Iraq is to be determined by the Iraqi people themselves.

Regarding Jordan's call on the Iraqi opposition to hold a conference in Amman, al-Kabariti said that by hosting such a conference Jordan aims to reach understanding "on the future mechanisms of action to save Iraq, secure its unity, prevent its fragmentation, and work out a concept on how to move out of the tragedy from which Iraq is suffering."

Al-Kabariti reiterated Jordan's readiness to host such a conference. He added that it is up to the Iraqi opposition itself to meet in Amman or elsewhere, and that Jordan seeks a unified Iraqi position to save Iraq.

Al-Kabariti also denied Jordan is mediating between Iraq and Israel to establish relations between them. He said: Every state has its own sovereignty and interests, and it is up to it to express the way which serves its sovereignty and interests. He pointed out that Jordan is playing the role requested by the parties concerned.

Regarding Jordanian-Kuwaiti relations, particularly Kuwait's request that Jordan should publicly apologize to it, al-Kabariti asserted that Jordan did not make any mistake for which it should apologize to Kuwait. The party that made the mistake should apologize, he added.

Al-Kabariti expressed hope that Kuwait will respond to the big and positive steps Jordan has taken. He pointed out that Jordan did all that was required of it, and

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that this matter should now be decided by the Kuwaiti institutions, whether official or elected.

With regard to Gulf security, al-Kabariti said that Jordan views Gulf security the same way it views security in any Arab state, because Arab security is comprehensive and integrated. He said that Gulf security is one of the issues of interest to us. He also stressed Jordan's support for Gulf security with all its capabilities.

Regarding Jordan's relations with Syria and Iran and the reported problems between Jordan and these two countries, al-Kabariti asserted that there is no political crisis between Jordan and Iran. He pointed out that the media crisis with Syria has been contained, and that Jordan hopes for distinguished relations with Syria. He reiterated Jordan's support for the Syrian position on the peace process.

Concluding his statement, al-Kabariti demanded the resumption of Arab summits. He pointed out that this issue surfaced clearly during the foreign ministers' recent discussions on the Arab Code of Honor at the Arab League. [passage omitted]

Deputies Complain of Inflation, Economic Hardship

JN2812082595 Amman JORDAN TIMES in English 28-29 Dec pp 1, 7

["Special to the JORDAN TIMES" by Sa'idah al-Kilani]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Amman—Deputies Wednesday showered the government with complaints over price hikes and poverty during a Lower House of Parliament session that ended before schedule because it lost quorum.

But the government maintained silence over the complaints, which were raised before the House started its debate of the Draft Labour Law and the House's draft bylaws.

Some deputies, focussing on their constituencies' needs, urged the government to take action to put an end to the continuous rise in prices and help in alleviating poverty in the Kingdom. In the question/answer period at the beginning of the session, Deputy Hatim al-Ghizawi complained from what he described as the farmers' poor situation due to the country's importation of the same fruits and citrus fruits that are produced by Jordanian farmers in quantities that meet the local demand.

"(The government) has recently allowed the importation of (1200 tonnes of) bananas though there is a balance in supply and demand of this commodity in the local market," deputy al-Ghizawi said: "We fear that this method would be applied again."

"I hope our borders would be closed in front of the importation of citrus fruits to boost the confidence of the Jordanian farmers, who impatiently await the coming of this season to sell their own production," he continued.

Islamic Action Front Deputy Muhammad al-Hajj protested against the confiscation of olive oil which Jordanian travellers who come from the West Bank bring with them." He said the travellers bring the oil as gifts to their parents and friends and not for commercial reasons.

Another IAF Deputy, Bassam 'Umush, complained from what he saw as the steep rise in prices. He said that the prices of more than 150 commodities, including basic commodities such as milk, eggs and meat have risen to a large extent while some brands of medicine were not available in the drugstores all over the Kingdom.

"The citizen is complaining now in a gentle way and is adopting legal methods." Dr. al-'Umush said.

"I hope the Cabinet would convene in an urgent meeting to discuss the issue and draft a proposal to put an end to the merchants' monopolies and (control of) prices," he said. "I am sure Prime Minister al-Sharif Zayd Bin-Shakir would respond positively to this demand."

During the session, the House also discussed the draft Labour Law, which was sent back by the Senate after it introduced amendments to some of its articles. The House approved some of the Senate's changes but rejected others. The draft law will now be referred back to the Senate for endorsement. However, if the Senate insisted on all amendments, then both Houses will convene in one session to discuss the draft law.

The House resumed discussions of its proposed new bylaws but the debate was cut short as the session lost quorum prompting House Speaker Sa'd Hayil al-Surur to end it. The House agreed last week to make Wednesday's session a lengthy one to speed up work on the draft bylaws. Last Sunday, the session ended before scheduled because of the loss of quorum.

The discussions of most of the bylaws articles, which govern the work, performance and the powers of the House's 80 lawmakers, have not received the attention of more tan 50 deputies at best. On Wednesday, some of the bylaws' provisions were endorsed by 21 votes out of only 41 deputies present. The minimum number of deputies needed to maintain quorum is 54 at the beginning of the session and 41 deputies afterwards.

The House will meet next Sunday to resume discussions of the House's draft bylaws.

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Paper Voices Optimism After Ramallah Withdrawal

JN2812094795 Amman AL-DUSTUR in Arabic 28 Dec 95 pp 1, 16

[Editorial: "Significance of Withdrawal From Ramallah"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Israeli occupation forces have completed their withdrawal from the city of Ramallah in accordance with the timetable agreed on in the second Oslo accord. Ramallah is the last of six West Bank cities that are to be evacuated before the end of the year and before the 20 January Palestinian elections.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of the withdrawal from Ramallah is the fact that the self-rule authority now covers the entire West Bank, excluding Hebron. The military occupation of Hebron is scheduled to cease in March of next year. This will greatly help the authority establish itself firmly on the ground and among the residents as a solid reality.

No doubt, this continued withdrawal in accordance with the timetable reflects Israel's implementation of the agreements and its fulfillment of its declared commitments. This withdrawal also underscores the fact that the peace process is progressing despite all difficulties and obstacles, the last of which was the assassination of former Israeli prime minister Yitzhaq Rabin.

We are optimistic about this progress in the peace process. We hope that this important development will create a more positive atmosphere so as to transform agreements and treaties into concrete reality. This will expand the camp of peace and win over other supporters who are hesitant to join this camp.

The completion of withdrawal from six West Bank cities coincided with the resumption of Syrian-Israeli talks yesterday. This is very significant, since it shows that the peace option, which was embraced more than four years ago, has inherent momentum that can overcome all artificial difficulties and achieve what all previous options failed to achieve.

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Buwayz Views Resumption of Israeli-Syrian Talks

NC2712141195 Beirut Voice of Lebanon in Arabic 1215 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] At a news conference today, Foreign Minister Faris Buwayz has stressed that if the negotiations on the Syrian-Israeli track succeed, this will give confidence to the Lebanese party about Israel's intentions. He said that if both parties reach agreement on the main points, the Lebanese-Israeli file will be ready. He noted that the Syrian-Israeli round of talks that will begin today are characterized by factors suggesting a serious possibility of reaching an understanding on the security arrangements.

In response to Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres' latest statement, Buwayz said that playing on words is a maneuver and not fit for negotiations. He said that Israel must put forward practical proposals that will help the parties to sit at the negotiating table. He added: We hope to hear in the next few weeks sound statements that constitute a real invitation to resume the negotiations.

On the resolutions of the Synod on Lebanon, Buwayz said that the synod is basically a spiritual gathering of men of religion and others. It discusses and addresses general and ideal principles. A politician may take of these principles what benefits the homeland. [passage omitted]

Fadlallah: Peace Will Not Cancel Islamic Movement

NC2812082095 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Ayatollah al-Sayyid Muhammad Husayn Fadlallah has voiced optimism about the Islamic movement worldwide. He stressed that the [Middle East peace] settlement will not end the Islamic movement politically and culturally. In his Koranic interpretation lesson, his eminence said: I do not think the settlement will cancel the Islamic movement politically or culturally; you must adopt the view that if a being does not cancel himself out, then no one can cancel him out. Throughout Islamic history, many sides have tried but failed to abort Islam.

Ayatollah Fadlallah said that since the launch of the Islamic Revolution under Imam Khomeyni, may his soul be sanctified, the U.S. Administration has been living in crisis. It tried to overthrow the Islamic Revolution through the war it imposed on it [through Iraq]. That was an international war. But the United States failed to overthrow the revolution although it placed all its weapons and the weapons of the East and West in the hands of the Iraqi regime.

On Turkey, Fadlallah said the victory of the Islamic Welfare Party shows that the Muslim Turkish people have taken the first step on the 1,000-mile journey toward restoring their Islamic identity.

Birri, al-Hariri in Damascus for Talks With Khaddam

NC2812124495 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1130 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Chamber of Deputies Speaker Nabih Birri and Prime Minister Rafiq al-Hariri will hold talks with Syrian Vice President 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam in Damascus today. The talks will deal with developments in the Middle East peace process, the resumption of Syrian-Israeli negotiations in Maryland in Washington, and some local issues.

Sudanese Officers Reportedly Training 'Terrorists'

NC2712134895 Cairo MENA in Arabic 1242 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Beirut, 27 Dec (MENA)—Lebanese judicial sources have revealed that Sudanese officers supervised training of a terrorist military network in Lebanon recently in line with plans to carry out bombings and assassinate religious personalities. The Lebanese newspaper AL-NAHAR reported today that among this cell's individuals who received military training in Lebanon are Ibrahim Mahyud Khalid Sa'b and Ibrahim Shatila. These sources said that security authorities are hunting down the rest of the members of this cell, which aims to fight the adherents of a different creed of the same religion. These sources pointed out that the initial investigations showed that there are three terrorist groups. The first was involved in assassinating Shaykh Nizar al-Halabi. The second plans to bomb shops that sell alcoholic drinks and some tourist areas. The third is involved in planning to assassinate Islamic personalities, particularly in Tripoli, north Lebanon. These sources said that Sudanese officers trained individuals from this group.

The judicial public attorney charged the five members who have been detained. They admitted to the assassination of Shaykh al-Halabi. The three Lebanese are Khalid Hamid and Rabi' Ahmad al-Kasm, [two names only, as received] and two Palestinians, Munir 'Abbud and Wasim 'Abd-al-Mu'ti. Palestinian official Ahmad 'Abd-al-Karim al-Sa'di alias Abu-Mihjan has been charged with planning to assassinate Shaykh al-Halabi. He resides in the Palestinian refugee camp in 'Ayn al-Hulwah.

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Israeli Shelling, 'Resistance' Attack Reported

NC2712172695 Beirut Radio Lebanon in Arabic 1630 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] At around 1545 today, the occupation forces' artillery in al-'Ayshiyah and al-Rayhan shelled Mazra'at 'Uqmata, the outskirts of the town of Sujud, and the Sujud-al-Rayhan woods in Iqlim al-Tuffah using 120-mm mortar rounds.

This was preceded by bombardment of the outskirts of Habbush and al-Wadi al-Akhdar originating from the occupation forces' positions in al-Zaffatah.

Earlier, the occupation forces stationed in Muhaybib in the central sector bombarded the suburbs of Haddathah and 'Ayta al- Jabal. In Western al-Biqa', the occupation forces' positions in Wadi Abu-Qamhah shelled Jabal al-Dahr and the vicinity of Mazra'at 'Ayn Fujur.

Elsewhere, a resistance group monitored an Israeli force in al-Dabshah inspecting the site of an operation that took place yesterday. The group attacked the force with rockets, scoring direct hits. The remnants of the enemy force escaped.

Islamic Resistance Claims Killing of Israeli Soldier

NC2812072595 Ba'labakk Voice of the Oppressed in Arabic 0630 GMT 28 Dec 95

[Report by Samir 'Alamah]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] The Islamic Resistance today continued its heroic operations against the Zionist enemy and its Lahdist Agents [South Lebanese Army, SLA]. As part of its continuous monitoring of Zionist enemy movements in its positions inside the occupied strip, at 0705 this morning the Islamic Resistance fire support unit, the Martyrs 'Ali Tu'mah and 'Abdallah Sh'aytu Group, killed a Zionist soldier at the Haddatha post. The fire support unit's Martyr Ahmad Dabuq Group targeted the same post using the appropriate weapons and scoring direct hits. [passage omitted]

This morning the occupation forces at the Humayyid post shelled the outer parts of Harisa and Wadi Sribbin with 120-mm artillery rounds and raked the area with 12.7-mm machine-gun fire. Al-Za'tar mountain near Bra'shit also came under 155-mm artillery shelling from the enemy post in Muhaybib.

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Newspapers Analyze New Round of Talks With Israel

JN2812130495 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 0552 GMT 28 Dec 95

[Press review]

[FBIS Translated Text] Under the headline "The Touchstone of Stands," the newspaper AL-THAWRAH says: Land is the main pillar of peace. He who wants to keep the land does not want peace. This is the equation President Hafiz al-Asad stressed at his joint news conference with Egyptian President Husni Mubarak. This equation will be the touchstone that will show the true new Israeli stands which should be adopted by the Israeli negotiating team to translate the new Israeli language used by Israeli Prime Minister Shim'on Peres into tangible facts which allow us to talk about a true and tangible progress in the peace process, and consequently to reactivate the Syrian and Lebanese tracks in order to achieve a just and comprehensive peace.

AL-THAWRAH stresses that the shortest road to peace with Syria and Lebanon is to announce commitment to full withdrawal from southern Lebanon and the Golan and to accept equal [mutasawiyah], parallel [mutawaziyah], equitable [mutakafi'ah], and reciprocal [mutabadalah] security arrangements on both sides of the 4-June 1967 lines.

Concluding its commentary, Al-THAWRAH says: If the new Israeli solutions are serious, then all that Israel should do is to heed the facts and requirements of peace, and to translate its words into deeds which would make it possible to talk about a true and tangible progress which puts optimism in its right place and open the road before the train of peace to arrive at its desired destination, the just and comprehensive peace.

In another commentary, AL-THAWRAH says: The resumption of the talks is a positive step in the right direction. It has revived hopes of the possibility of reactivating the peace process and of saving it from the stalemate and the vicious circle in which it revolves.

The paper says: The results of these talks will have a great impact on the situation in the entire region. It is not ruled out that these results would determine the destiny and future of the entire peace process.

AL-THAWRAH notes: Syria gave all it could in order to achieve the required success in the new talks. It is also ready to go to the end on the road of the just and comprehensive peace, particularly if it sees that the other party has sincere intentions certain and determination to achieve the objective of peace.

The paper says: Syria wants the peace process to succeed because it is concerned about regaining all its territories and rights, and about achieving security and stability in this sensitive region of the world. Inasmuch as it is committed to the objective requirements of peace, Syria rejects any compromise on its full sovereignty on the Golan to the 4-June 1967 lines.

Concluding, AL-THAWRAH says: In Syria's concept, peace means the restoration of territories and rights in full to their legitimate owners in accordance with the UN resolutions and the laws of the international legitimacy.

In its commentary on the resumption of the talks on the Syrian-Israeli track near Washington yesterday, the newspaper AL-BA'TH says: The talks on the Syrian-Israeli track drew great international and regional interest due to Syria's key role in the peace process and the importance of its position regarding the establishment of a durable and lasting peace in the region.

AL-BA'TH says: When Syria opted for peace, it was convinced of this, and it did not hesitate to do so. In other words, Syria's seriousness and concern about rendering the peace process a success are clear. Syria has proved this through its sincere cooperation with the efforts of the U.S. cosponsor and other international efforts to advance the peace process. It has also shown its credibility several times by affording one opportunity after another so that the peace process would not stop.

The paper adds: What Syria expects from the new round of talks which are being held near Washington is what it has always expected from the peace process; namely, to achieve the objective of a just and comprehensive peace.

AL-BA'TH says: If talks on the Syrian track stopped in the past and entered a state of slumber, then this was not due to the Syrian stand, but to the Israeli side's stand. When this side announced its disavowal of preconditions and expressed the desire to discuss issues related to the peace process on the Syrian track, Syria, which seeks to achieve peace, agreed to resume the talks. All Syria hopes for is that the other side will realize that any progress in the talks hinges on removing the previous obstacles.

Concluding its commentary, AL-BA'TH says: We in Syria hope that the Israeli side to the talks of the new round will this time have concepts that are identical to the bases of the peace process, so that doors will be open to this process.

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Radio Says Talks Depend on Commitment to Principles

JN2712153695 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1230 GMT 27 Dec 95

[Station commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] The eyes of all observers and politicians in the world are focused on the U.S. state of Maryland, where the Syrian-Israeli negotiations will resume today under U.S. sponsorship. These negotiations deserve such attention. They are the first of their kind after a six-month halt. Coming after a series of optimistic statements, the negotiations will deal with an issue of interest to all world states. All this places a heavy responsibility on the shoulders of the negotiations and the negotiators. It is a responsibility dictated by the magnitude of the issue in question and the international interest in it.

Although today's negotiations are exploratory, they will be held on bases and principles that aim to look for ways to advance the peace process in the region. The clarity of the bases and principles of the negotiations stems from the clarity of the foundations of the just and comprehensive peace aspired by the peoples of the region. Today's negotiations fall within the framework of the peace process which started in Madrid and which is based on international legitimacy, the UN Security Council resolutions, and the U.S. initiative. Therefore, the success of today's peace negotiations depends on the extent of the negotiators' adherence and commitment to those bases and principles. Consequently, the intentions and wishes to arrive at the aspired peace will be judged by the extent of this adherence and commitment to the bases and principles of peace.

Peace is the objective. According to international legitimacy, the essence of peace is territory. In light of this clarity, there is no room for loss, confusion, or waste of time. Peace means ending the occupation. He who wants to keep the occupied territory does not want peace. For the negotiations not to fail, the experience of the past four years must not be ignored. Rather, maximum benefit should be made of it. Attempts to circumvent the bases of peace and failure to be committed to international legitimacy have not made peace. Rather, this has halted the peace process on the most important track, the crucial track for achieving a comprehensive peace in the region.

Syria realizes the extent of its Arab, regional, and international responsibility. Therefore, it extended a helping hand to every sincere initiative that could help the parties arrive at a just and comprehensive peace. Proceeding from a sense of responsibility, Syria has been eager and is eager to abide by international legitimacy, UN resolutions, and the land-for-peace principle as the sole way to achieve the aspired peace. Syria was and still is ready for this peace and its requirements. Those requirements are based on justice, equality, balance, and equitability without any infringement on sovereignty. The requirements must also take into consideration everybody's interests and security.

Commentary: Caution Still Required Despite Optimism

JN2712182295 Damascus Syrian Arab Republic Radio Network in Arabic 1630 GMT 27 Dec 95

["Talk of the Return" commentary by Ibrahim Basyuni; from the "Palestine Broadcast" program]

[FBIS Translated Text] Syrian-Israeli talks will resume near the U.S. capital, Washington, today. The talks aim at reactivating the Syrian and Lebanese tracks. Reports indicate that this round of talks, which is scheduled to continue for three days, aims to prepare for the next rounds, which are scheduled to take place on 3 January in preparation for U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher's tour of the region on 10 January. The current round of Syrian-Israeli talks near Washington is, therefore, a round aimed at exploring the seriousness of intentions and the credibility of response to international resolutions.

Based on the recent Israeli statements, some political circles expressed optimism about this round. Despite the optimistic atmosphere preceding this round of talks, caution is still required. This is because the Israeli intentions regarding withdrawal and security arrangements need further clarification. Fear is still justified because the Israeli intentions need to be declared and clarified. Although the Israeli officials' recent statements encouraged the resumption of talks, what is required from Israel to make these talks achieve their aspired objective, led by a just peace, is to abide by the UN Security Council resolutions pertaining to the peace process and to implement these resolutions, which call for full Israeli withdrawal from the occupied Golan to the 4 June 1967 lines and from occupied southern Lebanon. Security arrangements must be based on equitable [mutakafi'ah], balanced [mutawazinah], and equal [mutasawiyah] bases between Syria and Israel so that security is provided for all parties and not for one party at the expense the other.

Through its leader struggler President Hafiz al-Asad, Syria stressed that peace is a strategic option. He said Syria offered and continues to offer all that would help advance the peace process. He stressed Syria's commitment to the Madrid terms of reference and the

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bases and principles of a just and comprehensive peace according to UN Security Council Resolutions 242, 338, and 425, and the land-for-peace principle. Hence, the success of the Washington talks depends on whether Israel will prove that the change that has occurred in its language and the statements of its officials on the peace process and its bases are the beginning of a new position based on definite and explicit commitment to the constants of peace, represented by the principle of trading land for peace and implementing it on the basis of full Israeli withdrawal from all occupied Arab territories. As President Hafiz al-Asad said, the territory is the basic pillar of peace.

A just, comprehensive peace can be achieved when the occupation and its causes and traces are removed. There will be no peace as long as one iota of the national soil is under the occupation. There will be no security and stability in the region unless they are based on equitability, balance, and equality. These are axioms that must be reiterated and adhered to if the peace process and the Syrian-Israeli talks are to recover from the current state of dormancy and if they are to achieve the aspired objectives.

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Afghanistan

Foreign Minister on Pakistan's Expulsion of Consul

LD2712140095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1230 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Expressing dismay at the recent act by Pakistan of expelling the Afghan General Consul from Peshawar city, Afghan Foreign Minister Najibollah Lafra'i described the measure as unjustifiable. Noting the fact that Musa Khan, Afghan consul general in Peshawar, was trying to establish contacts between Afghanistan and Pakistan, he said yesterday in Kabul that his expulsion was the act of the enemies of friendship between the two countries. The Afghan minister of foreign affairs noted the readiness of his country to have diplomatic relations with all countries, especially Pakistan and other neighbors, on the basis of noninterference in one others internal affairs and mutual respect.

Condemning the recent explosion in Peshawar, he called it an inhuman act.

High State Council Calls For Unity

LD2712194895 Kabul Radio Afghanistan Network in Pashto 1530 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [passage omitted] Knowing its great Islamic and national mission, the Islamic state of Afghanistan announces the following.

Afghanistan is the home of all its proud people. The people of all regions of this country have played an equal role in achieving the dignity of this land. During the jihad the true sons of this country fought the invaders in a united front as brothers. The victory of the Islamic revolution in this country is the fruit of the toil of the proud people of this land. Therefore, all our compatriots, forces and parties should ensure their practical presence in the organizational structure of running the state affairs, and achieve their [words indistinct] role to safeguard the values of the Islamic revolution.

While the Islamic state has clearly declared that it is ready to resolve the problems through talks, there is no need for resorting to weapons against one another. The state is ready to send high rank delegations [words indistinct] to hold urgent talks with the concerned parties on the solution of problems. A high rank state delegation headed by Professor Abdorrab Rasul Sayaf, leader of Ettehad-e Eslami, and member of the high state council, hold fruitful talks with some esteemed leaders and the members of Nangarhar jihadi council and exchanged views with them on the current situation of the country and on finding a solution to the problems.

It is planned that other high rank delegations will pay visits to other parts of the country too. The Islamic state is ready to continue consultation and exchange of views with all concerned parties and forces.

The High State Council warmly welcome all attempts and efforts that are made to ensure peace in this country. It is for this reason that it has always happily welcomed the efforts of the UN's special mission, of the OIC and of the friendly countries and has cooperated with them to succeed. The High State Council is fully of the opinion that all conditions are ready for the forces accord and for the solution of problems on the basis of the wishes and the interests of the Muslim nation of Afghanistan. [Words indistinct] We can speed up the reconciling movement by taking into account the high interest of the country. [Words indistinct] The country needs peace and the people need calm and the stability of the situation in order for the ruined Afghanistan to be reconstructed. All those wishes can be achieved only through the restoration of peace and national understanding.

By issuing this statement, the High State Council is taking the first step towards this glorious goal. Surely, the coordination of other parties and sides will help this move to reach its desired destination sooner than later.

Rabbani Said Ready for Talks With Party Leaders

LD2812103795 Tehran IRNA in English 1015 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Kabul, Dec. 28, IRNA — Afghan President Borhanoddin Rabbani here Wednesday [27 December] said that he was ready to hold talks with all Afghan party leaders to find a formula for cessation of clashes in Afghanistan.

Rabbani, who was speaking to members of the Peace Front and Islamic Brotherhood of Afghanistan, added that he was ready to hold talks with members of the Coordination Council, Taleban leaders, Jihad Council of Nangarhar as well as Golboddin Hekmatyar, General 'Abdol-Rashid Dostam, 'Abdolkarim Khalili, Sebghatollah Mojaddedi, Yunes Khalis, Molavi Mohammad Bani Mohammadi and Pir Seyyed Ahmad Gilani in order to end the crisis.

He added that government financial council had in its recent session ratified dispatch of delegations to Jalalabad, Mazar-e Sharif, Bamian, Kandahar and other parts of Afghanistan.

He concluded that among issues which could be discussed with other parties are ways to end the ongoing crisis in Afghanistan, transition of power and formation of an interim government.

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Rebel Radio Reports Rocket Attack on Kabul

LD2712144895 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Reports reaching here from Kabul say that yesterday too, some rockets hit Kabul City. At least three people were killed as a result of these rockets and seven others were injured. The reports say that most of the rockets hit civilian areas and the casualties were also civilian. It is to be said that over the past weeks, Kabul has been the target of consecutive rocket attacks.

Fighting Continues in Konduz

LD2712152895 (Clandestine) Radio Message of Freedom in Pashto to Afghanistan 0730 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] For three days, fighting has been going on in Konduz between Mirza Mohammad Naseri, a member of National Front and the police commander of the province, and Mir Alam, commander of the Supervisory Council. In a wireless contact, a correspondent of Radio Message of Freedom reported to us from Konduz Province that the clashes, which were occurring in Maweniyat road, Dorahi, Haji Ghani [words indistinct] and Ahangari Square, are still continuing.

During the fighting, in which heavy weapons such as BM-21, tanks, mortar, and other weapons were used, 20 people, including (?Juma Beg), a ringleader of Commander Mir Alam's group, were killed on both sides. More than 60 civilians were killed or injured. Our correspondent adds that on top of loss of life and casualties, much material damage has also been inflicted on the areas. The fighting between the two sides still goes on. The city of Konduz has been closed down as s result.

A responsible source of Hezb-e Eslami in Takhar Province told Radio Message of Freedom in a wireless contact that [words indistinct] increasing differences between the Jamiat and the Supervisory Council have led to the death of dozens of their men.

The source also said that very recently, five commanders of the Supervisory Council by the names of Qayum Jan, Mirza Dawlat, Habibollah, Abdorrahman, and Mohammad Khan were killed, and Commander Makhdom Abdollah [words indistinct] and three of his men were seriously injured during clashes between the Jamiat and the Supervisory Council.

India

Minister Views Air Drop, U.S. Arms for Pakistan

BK2812093895 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The external affairs minister, Mr. Pranab Mukherjee, has said that the airdropping of arms by a foreign aircraft at Purulia is a matter of concern and steps should be taken to prevent the recurrence of such incidents. Speaking to newsmen in Amritsar, he said detailed investigations will bring out the truth.

On the question of the U.S. arms supply to Pakistan, he said New Delhi has explained to Washington the likely implications of the supply for the Indian subcontinent.

He stressed the need for carrying out joint investigations at the international level to combat terrorism. Mr. Mukherjee said India has approached the UN to convene a meeting of member countries to tackle the problem of narcoterrorism.

Satellite Launched; Prime Minister Hails Success

BK2812091295 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India's second generation remote sensing satellite, IRS-1C, was successfully launched in a Russian Molniya rocket flight from Baykonur Cosmodrome at Kazakhstan this afternoon. The four-stage satellite launcher, with its semicryogenic engine, blasted off at 1215 Indian standard time [0645 GMT] as per schedule. After a 901 seconds voyage, the Molniya meticulously ejected the 1,250 kg state-of-the-art satellite. The separation and other processes of the launching went with clockwork position as planned.

The ground track station in various parts of the world, including (Bays Lake) in Russia; stations in Germany, USA, and South Africa; and similar facilities at Bangalore, Lucknow, Sriharikota, Thiruvananthapuram, Car Nicobar Islands, and Mauritius tracked the satellite.

Quoting ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] sources, our Bangalore correspondent, Sheshachandrika, reports that the satellite is in perfect condition. Today's events, which came close on the heels of the launching of INSAT-2C operations, reiterates India's capability in unequivocal terms to built the most sophisticated satellites both for remote sensing and multipurpose communication. IRS-1C, which will be switched on in another seven to 10 days and declared operational after another three weeks, is the most sophisticated civilian remote sensing satellite in the country. It even surpasses

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the capability of the French and U.S. satellites in terms of spatial and spectral resolution.

The prime minister has congratulated all the scientists, engineers, and staff of the ISRO on the successful launch of IRS-1C. In a message sent to the ISRO chief, Dr. K. Kasturirangan, Mr. Narasimha Rao said he is delighted at the launch and the normal functioning of the satellite. He said the launch marks a major milestone in the country's satellite program.

Said To Possess Spy Capability

BK2412110095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The IRS [Indian Remote Sensing Satellite]-1C, slated for launch this week, marks a major stride toward eventually developing a spy satellite capability. The high- resolution camera on board the satellite has a resolution of 10 meters enabling it to photograph ships, bridges and other key military installations. Backed up by an infrared camera and another wide-field camera the satellite has a great potential for intelligence-gathering purposes.

TV on Salient Features

BK2712054695 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 26 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India's latest remote sensing satellite, IRS-1C, is all set for launch from the Baykonur cosmodrome in Kazakhstan on Thursday [28 December]. Our correspondent, Gayatri Chandrashekhar, has the details:

[Begin Chandrashekhar recording] Thorough checks on the launch pad and fuel filling operations have been completed on IRS- 1C. The satellite was mated with the launcher day before yesterday. At the ISRO [Indian Space Research Organization] Telemetry, Tracking and Command Network — ISTRAC — Bangalore a full and final dress rehearsal of the forthcoming launch was successfully conducted today. Flow of data from Baykonur and supporting ground stations across the globe were smooth. The state-of-the-art and versatile satellite, IRS-1C, has a unique set of three cameras. Objects as small as 5.8 meters can be seen from a height of 1000 kilometers in stereo vision. And at the same time, a very wide stretch of 810 kilometers can be viewed. This satellite has the capability for seeing outside the human range of vision. On board data recording facility too is provided for. The National Remote Sensing Agency, Hyderabad will be receiving and processing the data from IRS-1C for commercial distribution worldwide by the EOSAT company of USA. [end recording]

Curtailment of Nuclear Energy Program Criticized

BK2412110195 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0830 GMT 24 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The parliamentary standing committee on energy has called for increased funding for the country's nuclear power program. In its report tabled recently, the committee has expressed disappointment that the government has given up the target of achieving 10,000 megawatt of nuclear electricity generation by 2000 AD and scaled it down to 2000 to 3000 megawatts. The report warns that this curtailment of the nuclear power program has far- reaching consequences, both strategically and technically. It also notes that critical equipment procured at a cost of over 1,300 crore rupees lies unutilized due to this pruning of the nuclear power program. In conclusion, the committee has urged the government to adopt a committed program of nuclear power generation to meet the need to develop a diversified energy base.

Commentary on Blueprint for Nuclear Power Program

BK2512053695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 25 Dec 95

[Commentary by K.S. Jayraman]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Ten years ago, India's Department of Atomic Energy, DAE, drew a blueprint for the country's nuclear power program. Under this program, the DAE had claimed that it would be building 22 additional nuclear power plants to generate 10,000 megawatt of electricity by the year 2,000. Orders for equipment were placed in advance. Existing facilities for producing fuel and heavy water were expanded in anticipation of demands and a new public sector company called the Nuclear Power Corporation of India was created to translate the blueprint into action. But the DAE appears to have been chasing a mirage. It seems to have overestimated its capacity to mobilize resources for its ambitious plan, especially when its track record of building nuclear power plants has not been that good. And, DAE's top officials who made tall promises to the people and the Parliament have since retired while their blueprint remained just on paper.

Five years ago, the target for nuclear power was reduced from 10,000 to 5,300 megawatt. It was subsequently again slashed. The present target is 3,320 megawatt by 2004 AD, that is eight years from now. It is astonishing that DAE, which has spent nearly 20,000 crore [one crore is equal to 10 million] rupees on nuclear power program will have created less than 3,000 megawatt capacity by the turn of the century. By then, China will have overtaken India. It is no wonder that the nuclear

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power program came under attack from the standing committee on energy in the just concluded session of the Parliament. The committee described the nuclear power policy as ad hoc and unacceptable. The DAE says it was not able to fulfill its promise due to lack of funds and political backing, but the committee has rightly taken the department to task for not having given serious thought to financial planning before launching its program.

The ad hoc policy has cost the tax payer heavily. According to the committee, items purchased for rupees 1,360 crores, mostly borrowed money, remain unutilized and they can only be sold as scrap. Interest on borrowings on March 1995 stood at 260 crore rupees. The committee has called for a probe to fix the responsibility for the shoddy handling of the nuclear power program. The government has always been generous in alloting money for atomic energy since 1950. If the flow of funds has now been reduced, it only suggest that DAE must improve its ways of building and running nuclear plants.

Hurriyat Conference Leader on Government 'Conspiracy'

BK2212150695 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] All Parties Hurriyat Conference leader Mirwaiz Omar Farooq has expressed concern over the custodial killings of innocent Kashmiris and said that the Indian Government has hatched out a conspiracy to physically eliminate the leaders of the Hurriyat Conference. Reports Ghulam Nabi Khayal from Srinagar:

[Begin Khayal recording] The All Parties Hurriyat Conference has strongly protested against the Indian forces in Kashmir for their taking to unabated acts of repression against the people of Kashmir, particularly during recent months. These acts, as the Conference has alleged, include custodial killings of detained Kashmiri youths, genocide of a generation, torching of residential areas and business centers, molestation of women, and unwarranted searching operations of the localities each day.

Addressing a press conference here in Srinagar today, the Conference chairman, Mirwaiz Omar Farooq, said these repressive measures were aimed at crushing the people's popular resistance movement. Mirwaiz Omar Farooq expressed grave concern over a steep rise in killings in custody by the forces. He said despite bringing pressure by several countries on Indian authorities, there has been no letup in these inhuman killings. He disclosed that the authorities have also hatched a conspiracy to eliminate physically the leaders of the Hurriyat Conference. A comprehensive list of all those Kashmiris killed in custody during the last one and half months was also released on this occasion. Most of the victims of these about 100 people tortured to death after arrest are in their 20's. [end recording]

There was a total strike in Srinagar to protest against the custodial killing of mojahed Commander Khurshid Ahmad Butt, who was brutally murdered by the Indian forces after he was arrested. Shops, offices, and schools remained closed and there was little traffic on the road. A large number of women participated in the protest demonstration. The troops used wanton force to disperse the demonstrators. A clash took place in downtown Srinagar when the Indian forces besieged a large area and launched search operations. The mojahedin challenged the forces and inflicted heavy casualties on them. Two mojahedin were martyred in the clash. In Rainabari, the mojahedin also attacked a military patrol and killed two soldiers.

Further on Alleged Government Plot

BK2412141395 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 24 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Reports from occupied Kashmir speak of continued brutal siege and search operations by Indian occupation forces. The troops besieged a settlement in Hindwara area and shot dead four innocent people after arrest. Mojahedin mounted a surprise attack on besieging troops, killing a number of them, including an officer. Indian military agents gunned down a person in Achhibal.

A senior Hurriyat Conference leader, Syed Ali Gilani, has said a special task force drawn from the regular Indian Army, Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Rajputana Rifles, and Rashtriya Rifles has been assigned the task of killing and torturing people belonging to the All Parties Hurriyat Conference. Reports our special correspondent Ghulam Nabi Khayal from Srinagar:

[Begin Khayal recording] The senior Hurriyat Conference leader, Syed Ali Gilani, has said that Indian Government and its forces in Kashmir are not only trying to crush the people's movement for right of self-determination but are also conspiring to assassinate the top-ranking leaders with their military might. In a statement issued here today, Syed Gilani, who is also the chairman of the political bureau of Jamaat-i-Islami, has cited some instances of killings of several prominent personalities, including legislators and advocates. Mr. Gilani has disclosed that a special task force comprising personnel from the regular Army, Border Security Force, Central Reserve Police Force, Rajputana Rifles,

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and Rashtriya Rifles has been assigned the task of killing and torturing the people also belonging to All Parties Hurriyat Conference, besides Jamaat-i- Islami.

While commenting on the gravity of the Kashmir problem, the Hurriyat leader has said that more than 1,000 million people living in the Indo-Pakistan subcontinent are facing problems and difficulties only because of this long-standing unsettled dispute. Mr. Gilani has refused to accept any official security offered to him after his house here became the target of a rocket attack last month and his ancestral home in north Kashmir was also blasted a few days ago. [end recording]

Congress-I Leaders Ask Pakistan To Vacate Kashmir

BK2612040595 Delhi Doordarshan Television Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The two-day training camp of the Congress-I has concluded in Jammu. The senior party leaders, who addressed the party workers at the camp, have asked Islamabad to vacate Pakistan occupied Kashmir. They urged the people of Jammu and Kashmir to unite for bringing in an era of peace and prosperity. The leaders included the finance minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh; the civil aviation minister, Mr. Ghulam Nabi Azad; the rural development minister, Dr. Jagannath Mishra; the minister of state for external affairs, Mr. R.L. Bhatia; the minister of state for home, Syed Sibte Razi; and the Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh [state] Congress Committee president, Mr. Ghulam Rasool Khar. The leaders said that the center [central government] is committed to restoring normalcy in the state and bringing stability and all round development in the country.

Congress-I Confident of Early Elections in Kashmir

BK2612150895 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1430 GMT 26 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Congress-I has expressed confidence that the situation in Jammu and Kashmir will be fully conducive within two months for holding free and fair elections in the state. Briefing newspersons in New Delhi, the party joint secretary, Major Ved Prakash, said that over 1,700 delegates at the recently held training camp in the state expressed the desire for early elections. He said the Election Commission should review the situation in the state again and decide on conducting the elections.

Hard-Core Kashmir Militants Surrender With Arms

BK2212012595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, 22 hard-core militants, mostly belonging to banned Hizbul Mujahidin, today surrendered with their weapons before major general D.B. Shekatkar, at Hazratbal on the outskirts of Srinagar city. The other militants belonged to banned Al-Omar and the JKLF [Jammu and Kashmir Liberation Front].

Guards To Supplement Security Forces in Kashmir

BK2512160995 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] In Jammu and Kashmir, over 1,100 village guards are being appointed to help security forces fight militancy. The union minister of state for home, Syed Sibte Razi, told a news conference in Jammu today that the center has sanctioned 2 crore and 29 lakh rupees for the scheme. The minister, who toured the border areas of Rajaori District today, said the morale of the security forces is very high and the local people are fully cooperating with them.

Punjab Police Arrest 'ISI Agent' in Ludhiana

BK2512160695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 25 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Punjab police nabbed an ISI [Inter Service Intelligence — Pakistani intelligence agency] agent, Shahid Moinuddin, at village Keel in Ludhiana District late last night. The state police chief, Mr. K.P.S. Gill, said in Ludhiana that the man surrendered after a brief encounter with the police. The agent admitted that he sneaked into India to hand over a consignment of arms and to recruit youths for terrorist activities.

Official Views Subregional Cooperation in SAARC

BK2612163595 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 1530 GMT 26 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The minister of state for external affairs, Mr. Salman Khursheed, says India is prepared to examine subregional cooperation within the SAARC [South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation] region. He said it is not necessary to wait for all the seven states of SAARC to open up their domestic markets. Three or four countries can get together and keep up the speed of integration under SAPTA [South Asian Preferential Trading Arrangement]. He was addressing a conference of Nonresident Indians in New Delhi today.

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Pact Signed With Russia on Space Research Cooperation

BK2412105695 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 24 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] India and Russia have agreed to expand cooperation in the field of applied space research. According to an official release in Moscow, an agreement to this effect was signed by the director of the Space Applications Center at ISRO [Indian Space Research Center], Dr. George Joseph, and his Russian counterpart at the end of the two-day meeting of the Indo-Russian working group on space cooperation. Among the areas of cooperation are earthquake studies and prediction and estimation of soil moisture and vegetation parameters.

Trade Ban on Yugoslavia, Serbia, Montenegro Lifted

BK2212045095 Delhi All India Radio Network in English 0245 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The government has announced lifting of the ban on trade with Yugoslavia, Serbia, and Montenegro. This follows the withdrawal of sanctions by the UN against these countries with the Bosnia peace accord coming into operation.

Iran

Further Reportage, Commentary on U.S. Senate Bill

Velayati Letter to Butrus-Ghali

NC2812073995 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0330 GMT 28 Sep 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Following America's recent threats against the Islamic Republic of Iran, Foreign Minister Velayati has sent an official letter to UN Secretary General Butrus-Ghali, describing the U.S. Senate bill on approving a budget for covert, subversive [kharabkari] activities in Iran and America's unilateral efforts to harm Iran's economic relations with other countries as a blatant violation of recognized global norms ruling relations among nations.

In his letter, the foreign minister stresses that the American Government will be fully responsible for the acute and unpredictable consequences and for creating instability and insecurity in international relations—the outcome of such acts.

Pointing out that the White House and Congress have agreed to interfere through subversive activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran by supporting groups opposing Tehran and by creating new adversaries, Velayati says that the international community, the United Nations in particular, should seriously and immediately examine these acts and react.

Elsewhere the letter says: Since most of these groups' participation in terrorist acts against the people of Iran, both at home and abroad, is proven by undeniable and authoritative documents and is confirmed by the American Government, the current policy of the United States is nothing but the most blatant example of support for terrorism in its most overt and official form.

In his letter to the UN secretary general, the foreign minister states that the involvement of the CIA, as a U.S. Government organ, in this issue speaks of the legalization of state terrorism. Such a policy contradicts the fundamentals of international law and the principles of the UN Charter and the fundamental principle of respect for the sovereignty and political independence of countries and noninterference in others' affairs.

The letter also states: These policies should be clearly and universally condemned and the United Nations, especially the UN secretary general, must shoulder a major responsibility in preventing the tragic consequences of such policies.

Law 'Expert' Comments

NC2812085795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0430 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The U.S. Senate recently agreed to allocate $20 million to subversive acts in Iran. The approval of this bill is overtly contrary to international laws. To further discuss the legal aspects of this issue, correspondent Javanfekr interviewed Dr. 'Amid Zanjani, a university professor and an expert on legal affairs, especially international law. Stating that America's recent attempts are contrary to international law, 'Amid Zanjani said:

[Begin Zanjani recording] If we take only the UN Charter as a criterion, this attempt by America is contrary to several of the Charter's articles. The first article explicitly states that respect for the independence and sovereignty of governments is an international responsibility that should be undertaken by all the UN members, who should respect the sovereignty of governments and the independence of nations and should refrain from attempts that are contrary to this respect for sovereignty and contrary to the equality of governments.

The first point that should be considered here is that this recent attempt by America stems from the Senate's

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secret budget and inevitably disagrees with the second article of the UN Charter and the first article of the Charter, which is its prologue, setting out international responsibility. International responsibility—in the language of international law—has a special meaning that entails compensation for damages.

The issue of no-threat is a principle in international law. Various parts of the UN Charter clarify that governments cannot resort to threats. This is a rule, the violation of which takes us back to international responsibility. This attempt by America is contrary to the principle of avoiding force and threats. With this attempt, America has resorted to threats and has threatened a nation and country that is an official member of the United Nations and the international family. Again this becomes an issue of international responsibility. [end recording]

Reasons Viewed

NC2812081795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 28 Dec 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] As you heard on the news, Foreign Minister Dr. 'Ali Akbar Velayati has sent a letter to the UN secretary general protesting the new terrorist overtures by the American Government and calling for global condemnation of this attempt.

Recently the White House approved a Congress bill to allocate $20 million to spying and subversive activities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, thus displaying a rare example of state terrorism. In this way, not only do America's rulers display their aggressive and interfering nature, but they also display their indifference toward international laws and regulations and the principles ruling relations among countries, the need to respect the political independence and sovereignty of other countries, and the need not to interfere in others' domestic affairs.

Naturally, such overtures, which stem from the American rulers' hostility toward Islamic Iran, are condemned diplomatically and, from the legal aspect, are considered as aggression against the rights of other nations. The international community will not accept the American adventurers' efforts to impose their own decisions on the world and to turn state terrorism into a custom.

Such attempts by the Americans are not unprecedented. The American Government once approved a bill allowing itself to kidnap people in other countries. But the new bill by Congress and the White House, imposing terrorism on the Islamic Republic of Iran, is unprecedented in that it blatantly ignores international laws and regulations and displays the bullying and domineering nature of the American leaders.

Political experts consider the approval of the American Government's new terrorist bill against the Islamic Republic of Iran as proof of America's incompetence in confronting our country by imposing economic sanctions. But they also warn that such attempts by the American leaders in the form of a decision concerning an independent member of the international community or the entire community speak of their efforts to impose their hegemony on the world, which should be condemned by every member of the international community.

U.S. 'Warships' Reported in Persian Gulf

LD2712195695 Tehran IRNA in English 1530 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The United States has deployed three warships in the Persian Gulf. The warships, carrying four thousand military personnel, have arrived in the Persian Gulf under the pretext of supervising United Nations Security Council sanctions against Iraq and participating in training manoeuvres with United States allies.

Following Iraq's occupation of Kuwait in the second half of 1990, the United Nations Security Council imposed far-reaching sanctions against Baghdad. A spokesman for the United States Navy claimed that the three warships sent to the Persian Gulf waters are considered as part of an ordinary deployment of United States forces in the region. Analysts consider the United States military presence in the Persian Gulf as a factor giving rise to tension in regional states as well as intensifying instability and insecurity in the region.

Commentary on U.S. Military Presence in Asia

LD2712200295 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran in English 1530 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The American press reported yesterday, Tuesday December 26, the trial of three American soldiers is nearing its end in Japan. A few months ago the three Americans had kidnapped and raped a 12-year-old Japanese primary school girl in Okinawa, Japan. The barbarous act caused widespread and intense anger and fury in Japan and turned into a new political scandal for the United States. Under the Japanese public opinion pressure Washington was forces to hand in the three rapists to the Japanese judicial officials. Based on the latest report two of the three

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criminals have testified against their accomplice and named him the prime suspect responsible for the crime.

Regardless of how the Japanese judiciary system will handle the perpetrators of this ugly incident, it is certain that the American military has found itself in a very difficult situation. The presence of the American militarymen has had widescale destructive, moral and cultural effect in the host countries. The corruption caused by the presence of American troops in various countries of the world has caused widespread and angry reactions; and example of which is the current crisis in Japan. The Philippines, Thailand and South Korea are the victims of American military presence in their countries which have found themselves caught in the consequences of this problem after years of tolerating the imposed condition. Thailand - a country which is now reputed to be a haven for the criminals - the American military bases have had an important role in spreading corruption, lewdness and immoral and obscene activities in that country. In the Philippines the destructive role of American bases caused widescale popular protests in the country and made the Americans close-down their bases there. In Japan, in South Korean, in which the United States has its most military presence, cultural problems are growing to a degree that are causing general malice in those countries.

As a matter of fact many cultural abnormalities and the growth of social pollution in those countries can be considered effects of this phenomenon. The concerns over this issue has convinced the Japanese people to reconsider seriously the presence of American military bases in their country in order to protect their social and cultural health and identity.

Washington is in a difficult position in facing this crisis. It is not only the Japanese people who consider the American military men as a factor of corruption growth in the country. The South Koreans and the Thais and the people of other countries also think the American military presence in their homelands to be the most important cause for the expansion of corruption in their societies and this will creat more anti-American crisis-spots throughout the world in the future.

Dailies View Clinton's New Moves Against Nation

LD2312115895 Tehran IRNA in English
1045 GMT 23 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Tehran, Dec. 23, IRNA — Two English-language dailies Saturday commented on Washington's new anti-Iran moves luring Europe to join in the punitive efforts of the United States.

Iran news stated that observers in Iran believe that, as in the past, the White House occupant is in for another disappointment, adding that this time, President Bill Clinton has tried, and failed, to convince Europe, Japan and Canada to join his anti-Iran campaign.

"Clinton is trying to isolate Iran politically and economically, while Europe prefers to have political and commercial ties with the Islamic Republic, a fact which has been proven several times in the past," it underlined.

The United States is now controlling the vital oil supply to Europe which is not acceptable to europeans, the editorial wrote, "and the last European hope, that at least one European country, namely the U.K., would have some influence left in the region, were shattered as a result of the Persian Gulf war which guaranteed United States' supremacy in this region."

In the meantime, Europe has come to realize that to chant anti-Iran slogans is just a U.S. political ploy, it noted and added, "the Europeans now know that America just wants to create a gulf between Iran and Europe."

Saying that America is absolutely wrong in claiming that Iran provokes its Persian Gulf neighbors, the daily stressed that it is a well-documented fact that Iran is playing a vital mediator role in the region as well as in other countries such as Tajikistan, Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Referring to Tehran's policy on nuclear weapons, Iran news stated "in the past, international inspectors have visited Iranian facilities and confirmed that Tehran's nuclear plan is for peaceful purposes only."

European dependence on the Persian Gulf for oil will increase in the decades to come and America wants to keep its hold on this part of the world, it reiterated, adding, "this is one of the reasons why Washington has brought a large military force to the Persian Gulf under the guise of regional security."

"Regional security is just an excuse," the article underscored, further stating that the Americans know very well that Iran has no territorial ambitions towards its neighbors.

Iraq was a potential regional danger, but Baghdad no longer has the strength for military and territorial adventurism, it said.

It concluded that the United States would remain a passive observer and there would be more disappointments in store for Clinton.

Another daily TEHRAN TIMES also wrote that a 20-million-dollar covert, anti-Iranian program was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday adding, on the same day, the Senate approved a bill

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tightening current U.S. sanctions against Iran by punishing foreign firms that invest in Iran's oil industry.

"It is a bare instannce of interference not only in Iranian internal affairs but in internal affairs of more than one hundred countries which maintain trade relations with Iran," it stressed.

The U.S. moves are negative and positive both, it said adding, "they are negative because they augur U.S. bullying and domineering in what the American politicians term as the new world order: they are positive because they show that the U.S. dream of the new world order is not coming true as President Bush and President Clinton expected."

George Bush rushed into a war in the Persian Gulf precisely because he regarded the region as constituting the nerve centre of the industrial economies, the paper noted, the U.S. officials envisaged that a U.S. naval presence in the Persian Gulf would enable them to dominate and control a region endowed with 63 percent of the world's proven oil resources.

It reiterated that although about 42 percent of Western Europe's oil supplies and 62 percent of Japan's oil requirements are met from the Presian Gulf, the U.S. presence in the region has not forced Japan and Europe to submit to U.S. bullying.

U.S. politicians have been playing Iran's card in election competitions, it said adding, Zionist circles have had a decisive influence on U.S. politicians in this dirty game.

However, time is not on the U.S. side, the daily said, "it is not possible to interfere in domestic affairs of all members of the community of nations: it is impossible to punish them all."

The American civilization is on decline, it underscored, instead of confronting all members of international community, the White House should follow a conciliatroy policy not only towards Iran but towards all economic partners of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Commentary: New U.S. Sanctions Will Fail

LD2312184595 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1555 GMT 23 Dec 95

[Unattributed commentary]

[FBIS Translated Text] From its beginning, the Islamic Revolution of the Iranian people has witnessed the enmity of World Arrogance led by the world-devouring United States.

In the 17 years between the birth and maturity of the Islamic Revolution, the warmongering and rootless American statesmen have used every opportunity to destroy the roots of the existence of the Iranian people, and toward this end they have spent billions of dollars and spared no effort to fight Islamic Iran and to bring down the Islamic order.

Various plots — including agitation of various terrorist and anti-revolutionary grouplets, extensive economic sanctions, direct military interference and imposition of war on the Iranian people — were only a part of hostile American actions in the first two years of the Islamic revolution.

During the eight years of the sacred defense, Washington directly and indirectly supported the enemies of the Iranian nation and equipped and armed them with various weapons of mass destruction.

The White House took its hostility against the very existence of the Iranian nation to the point that, in the last months of the war, it directly entered war against Iran and attacked Iranian oil platforms in the Persian Gulf, and more importantly, shot down a civilian airplane and martyred 270 innocent passengers.

In the period following the imposed war, while the Iranian nation and government were using every effort to rebuild the destruction left from the ruinous war, the United States continued its biased propaganda and imposition of illegal pressure on other countries to prevent them expanding their relations with the Islamic Republic.

The most recent American actions in this regards are the approval given by the [U.S.] Senate to a plan suggested by the Zionist senator, Alfonse D'Amato, regarding economic sanctions against foreign investment companies working in Iran and an approval by the Bill Clinton administration to allocate a $20 million budget to the Central Intelligence Agency to damage and overthrow the order of the Islamic order.

The White House, alleging Iranian rearmament and support for terrorism, is using every means to attract the support of its allies in Europe and Asia in order to bring about the grounds for isolating Iran.

This is taking place at a time when Washington has failed to provide any evidence or reason for its baseless claims and when Iran has repeatedly proved that — despite an urgent need to strengthen its military capacity after eight years of imposed war — it has no expansionist intention and has in fact, according to existing data, the lowest military investment among Middle Eastern countries.

Similarly, accusations of terrorism against Iran has been made at a time when the United States has supported every terrorist effort against the Islamic Republic.

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Under such circumstances, the countries of the world take into account the reasonable position of Iran, as well as the American expansionist and interventionist policies and are thus not prepared to support American terrorism against the Iranian nation.

The White House, despite its failure to convince its European and Asian allies to participate in sanctions against Iran, continues to call for their support and furthermore, approves a $20 million budget for hopeless intervention in Iranian internal affairs and for damaging the Islamic order — this indicates open enmity with the Iranian nation and government.

Experts believe that the action by the U.S. Senate to approve sanctions against Iran's trading partner is a clear violation of national sovereignty of countries as well as international law and regulations and that allocation of a budget — with the aim of causing destruction — amounts to intervention in the affairs of an independent and law abiding nation, and furthermore indicates American support for international terrorism.

Analysts agree that American efforts to damage the Islamic Republic and Washington's interventionist policy will not bring any benefit to the United States except to reveal the aggressive and terrorist nature of the rulers of the White House.

It would be better if the tenants of the White House did not continue their futile and unwise efforts that only bring about further U.S. isolation in the international community.

Russia's Davydov Holds Economic Talks With Habibi

LD2812113795 Tehran IRIB Television First Program Network in Persian 1030 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Oleg Davydov, the Russian deputy prime minister and minister of foreign economic relations, who has come to Tehran to finalize the long-term economic cooperation agreement between the two countries, met with First Vice President [Hasan] Habibi today.

He described the outcome of his talks with the Iranian authorities as positive. He said: Russia attaches a great deal of importance to its friendly and strategic ties with the Islamic Republic of Iran, and does not allow other countries to interfere in those ties. Referring to the political will of his country's authorities to further expand relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran, he added: There are numerous potentials for the expansion of commercial and economic ties between the two countries. With the imminent formation of the joint committee that cooperation will increase.

He said the interference of foreign powers in the region is unacceptable. He added: The Caspian Sea belongs to its littoral states, and only those countries should decide on the manner of its use.

At the meeting First Vice President Habibi expressed satisfaction about the good level of diplomatic cooperation between Iran and Russia. He said: With the signing of the long-term cooperation agreement, the way for the signing of which has been paved during this trip, in the near future the two countries' commercial and economic ties will enter a new phase.

Opposing any form of illegitimate presence or interference by the United States in Central Asia, the Caucasus, and the Caspian Sea, he said: The countries in the region should resolve the problems in the region themselves. He finally expressed the hope that the continuation of cooperation and further consultation between Iran, Russia, China, and India will help establish peace and stability in the region.

Radio on VOA Reportage on 'Undercover' Program

LD2412180095 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0500 GMT 24 Dec 95

[Italicized passages recorded]

[FBIS Translated Text] [Unidentified correspondent] As it has been reflected in our country's media, THE WASHINGTON POST, in one of its latest issues, has reported on nthe White House's agreement with the allocation of an undercover program against Iran. The Persian section of the American radio [VOAP] says this about that.

[Unidentified VOAP correspondent, in Farsi] *A press report says that Clinton's administration has agreed with a Congress move to set aside a budget for an undercover program against Iran. THE WASHINGTON POST daily writes: The aim of the program is to moderate the extremist policies of Iran's religious, Islamic regime. America has not made any official comment on that report.*

[Correspondent] As you heard, the U.S. Administration has not officially commented on the agreement with that budget which pursues the implementation of an undercover program. That is why it is obvious that the reporting of the news by THE WASHINGTON POST and then its broadcast by VOAP can demonstrate the many existing problems within the U.S. Government establishment.

The VOAP, in another of its commentary sections, and after the announcement of the White House agreement

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with the executive bill for undercover operations against the Iranian Government, speaks of the speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives' agreement with that bill. But between the lines of its item it admits to disputes between the White House and that country's Congress.

[Unidentified VOAP announcer, in Farsi] *The WASHINGTON POST writes: The speaker of the house has given way to White House pressure and announced his agreement for the adoption of a bill that allows only a limited undercover operation against Iran. The aim of the operation is to moderate the extremist Iranian regime and, among other things, to raise some opponents to confront the Iranian regime.*

[Correspondent] As you heard, the aim is to raise opponents to confront the Islamic Republic of Iran, approving a new budget. Obviously the $20 million budget is one that is to be spent only in the next Christian calendar year for the growth and spread of the activities of the anti-Iran American grouplets. Otherwise, the budgets that have been spent in the past 17 years in the same course amount to billions of dollars.

Anyhow, the main point is that there have been strong disputes within America and between the White House and the two houses of that country over the policies of the past 17 years against Iran. On the surface it appears that the speaker of the house, under the influence of Zionist circles, stresses the past policies to overthrow [the government of] our country. But the White House, bearing in mind past experiences, does not believe the expenditure of huge budgets for extending the activities of the grouplets to be fruitful. That is why it only insists on economic and oil sanctions against Iran.

Of course, American media, especially the Persian section of that country's radio station, have spent a lot of effort to cover up those disputes. Nevertheless, between the lines of their reports and comments, they have admitted such disputes. Here is the VOAP on the newly approved budget for the so-called raising of opponents to Iran:

[Unidentified VOAP announcer] *As a result, the budget that has been approved by the Congress allows only a limited undercover operation against the Iranian Government. Merely $20 million have been earmarked for that. According to that program, instead of trying to topple the Iranian regime, they will be trying to stem the Iranian Government's extremist policies and encourage the Iranian Government to gradually move toward democracy.*

[Correspondent] Of course it is clear that, according to the Zionist-dependent U.S. officials, it is only Iran that must "gradually move toward democracy"; otherwise, in their opinion, there is no need for their allies and vassals — who have no inkling about elections, parliament, and other democratic institutions — to move toward democracy.

The Persian Section of the Zionist radio station also goes to town about the same subject and speaks of U.S. objectives to give financial support to certain opponents of Iran.

[Unidentified Israeli radio announcer, in Farsi] *A Washington White House spokesman has agreed to a proposal by House Speaker Newt Gingrich to give practical support to operations aimed at moderating the extremist policies of the Islamic government of Iran and financial support to certain opponents of the Islamic government.*

[Correspondent] As you heard, a proposal by the U.S. speaker of the house means the continuation of the financial support that so far, during the past 17 years, have been given to anti-revolutionary grouplets, as well as the liberal [as heard] factions. Nevertheless, the new budget looks to the future and has been approved only after a series of intense negotiations that resulted from the deep differences between the White House and the Congress. Despite its efforts to cover up those differences, the Zionist regime's radio indirectly reveals the existence of severe contradictions in the American regime.

[Unidentified Israeli radio announcer, in Farsi] *According to the proposal, in 1996, which begins in eight days' time, the United States will spend $20 million to cover practical operations against the Islamic Republic and to support certain opponents of the regime. A White House spokesman, who refused to give details, said: Newt Gingrich is pleased with the approval of the proposal, although it the proposal differs from his first one.*

[Correspondent] Setting aside those issues, it is obvious that the recent decisions by the American rulers, just as before, provokes the Iranian people's anger against the White House rulers. Therefore, in order to prevent such a situation, Washington has embarked on widespread propaganda aimed at separating the Iranian nation from the government. Listen to this.

[Unidentified VOAP announcer, in Farsi] *America has no difficulty with the people of Iran, but the problem has been created by the unacceptable approach of the Iranian Government.*

[Correspondent] As you heard, Clinton's remarks seem more like crocodile tears. To [prove] the veracity of that claim, it is not a bad idea to take a look at America's past posturing with regard to the Iranian nation so that we better understand the true meaning of that propaganda.

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[Unidentified announcer, in Farsi] *Caspar Weinberger, the [former] U.S. defense Secretary, has described the Islamic government of Iran and its leaders as lacking soundness of mind.*

[Unidentified announcer, in Farsi] *The U.S. defense secretary said that the best way to end Iran's belligerence is to implement a UN embargo plan regarding Iran's imports. Weinberger added:*

[Weinberger, in English] *If the embargo resolution were carried out, then you could very quickly dry up Iran's capability of conducting a war and, indeed, their ability to exist as a nation.*

[VOAP announcer, giving translation in Farsi] *If the embargo resolution is implemented, Iran's capability to continue the war will quickly dry up and, in fact, Iran's existence as a nation will tend to dry up.*

[Correspondent] Then the aim, indeed, is to dry up the Iranian nation and the differentiation made by the White House between the Iranian nation and government is merely to facilitate that ominous objective.

In the past 17 years, America has well experienced the fact that as long as the Iranian nation and government enjoy each other's support, the implementation of any scenario in Iran will face difficulties. Therefore, through new propaganda — and not such new propaganda at that — it tries to create a rift between the nation and the government, little realizing that the government's roots are within the populace and inflicting any harm to the government will be considered as harming the people.

Aside from that, the allocation of a budget to carry out undercover operations against a state is taken as a blatant violation of international rights and regulations. That is because such a move is considered as interference in the internal affairs of other states, which is condemned in international law. Had Iran embarked on a similar action against America, [imagine] what propaganda clamor they would make of it and what measures they would have adopted [when you consider] that up to now they have accused Iran over and over again of interfering in others' internal affairs when Iran has not done anything. That is the New Order that America claims to lead.

Paper Views Turkish 'Suppression' of Islamists

NC2512163895 Tehran JOMHURI-YE ESLAMI in Persian 13 Dec 95 p 15

[Commentary by A. Salah: "The Algeria Syndrome in Turkey"]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] Only 10 days remain before the early parliamentary elections in Turkey and everything in that country, even its political future, is being overshadowed by the elections and their outcome.

All the political factions in Turkey have promoted their candidates with the requisite electioneering campaign for them and with propaganda exposing others. What is most important is the effort by secular factions to thwart the overall tilt in Turkish society toward the Islamic forces. These efforts take the form of the amazing internal and external games toward this end.

The Turkish armed forces in their capacity as the military machine of laicism [preceding word in English] expelled 50 officers for Islamist leanings and as a warning against any victory by Islamic groups, in order to intimidate them. The news of this action was disseminated in the Turkish secular press under headlines such as: "The Unprecedented Crackdown Against Reactionaries on the Eve of the Elections." [passage omitted]

This is an example of the "Algeria Syndrome" [preceding word in English]. That is, in an effort to prevent the supremacy of Islam, the proponents of democracy consider themselves authorized to use dictatorship and military force.

This is the logic of democracy that manifested itself in Algeria, and now we see signs of it in Turkey! [passage omitted]

Necmettin Arbakan the leader of the Islamic Welfare [Refah] Party in Turkey is trying to take this propaganda from the hands of the secularists on the eve of the elections by nominating some candidates with a neutral stance and even leaning more toward the secularists along with the other Islamist nominees. He hopes this will eliminate any reaction by the secularists in the event of a Welfare Party victory. Accordingly, he has included some conservatives and retired generals in the list of his party's candidates.

In conjunction with the above tactics, which have displeased the Muslim masses, the residents of the Kurd-inhabited areas are extremely resentful that not even one of the individuals who enjoy the trust of the Muslim people has been included as a Welfare Party candidate. However an incident occurred that may make people somewhat forget this complaint. The leader of the Pan-Turanist Nationalist Action Party, Alparslan Turkes, included a candidate on his list who called the ancestors of the Kurdish people satans in his latest book. [passage omitted]

In such sensitive circumstances, European circles are also striving to prevent a victory by the Islamic groups

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in the Turkish elections, an example of which is the European Parliament's approval of Turkey's membership in the European Customs Union.

This decision is to be ratified tonight in the European Parliament and it will mark the realization of a longstanding dream of the secular Turkish regime—joining the European tariff system. This could eventually pave the way for turkey's membership in the European Union.

However, at the last moment, two preconditions were incorporated into the draft of the document in order to extort more concessions from Turkey, including the withdrawal of Turkish forces from north Cyprus and the official recognition of the PKK [The Kurdish Workers' Party]. These conditions have chagrined and infuriated the Turkish secularists. [passage omitted]

Meanwhile, Turkey's Supreme Military Council has expelled 50 Muslim officers from the armed forces for Islamic activity and has indirectly sent Westerners the message: "Do not fear. We are awake."

TV Views Yemen-Eritrea Dispute, Israeli Role

NC2312082795 Tehran Voice of the Islamic Republic of Iran First Program Network in Persian 0445 GMT 23 Dec 95

[Commentary by the News Research and Commentary Group]

[FBIS Translated Text] While regional and international organizations have called on Eritrea to negotiate a settlement to resolve its dispute with Yemen over Greater Hanish and two other islands in the Red Sea, Asmara has announced that it will accept no recommendations in this regard.

Qatar and the Organization of Islamic Conference [OIC] have condemned the military clash between Yemen and Eritrea in the Red Sea and have offered to mediate between them. The Arab League and the UN Security Council have called on Asmara and Sanaa to resolve their differences through negotiations. Yemen has announced that it is willing to hold talks with Eritrea but has stated that talks are conditional on the withdrawal of Eritrean forces from Greater Hanish.

With Eritrea's rejection of talks, it now looks as if the crisis between Sanaa and Asmara has a long road ahead. Last Monday [18 December] the crisis between Eritrea and Yemen began when the Eritrean forces unexpectedly attacked the disputed islands in the Red Sea and occupied Greater Hanish. Up until 1970, these islands were under British occupation and were handed over to south Yemen after the British left.

With the unification of the two Yemens and the replacement of the Aden government by Sanaa, the islands came under Sanaa's sovereignty. Eritrea has territorial claims on the three disputed islands, which provide the possibility of control over the strategic Bab al-Mandab straits. They are important to both countries.

Observers believe the Eritrean move of occupying Greater Hanish was instigated by countries that do not want Yemen to dominate the Bab al-Mandab island and strengthen its regional position. After unification, and with the pooling of the resources of its north and south, Yemen attained a position that gave it the power to compete with regional powers.

Even now, on the regional level, Yemen is more heavily involved in rivalry with Saudi Arabia than any other country. This rivalry stems from border differences between the two countries and also stems from their regional positions. Israel has always had its eye on the Red Sea so that the countries that have no problems with Israel might attain predominance in the region.

Hence, Tel Aviv is not very pleased about Yemen holding sway over the region. The Egyptian foreign minister voiced his opinion on Israel's possible role in inciting Eritrea to occupy Greater Hanish. Such is the island's strategic importance, it is not unlikely that Tel Aviv sought to extricate it from Yemen's occupation.

Since the differences between Eritrea and Yemen may be prolonged, the region's countries may be drawn into adopting stances or forging fronts. It may thus become a regional crisis. The negative fallout of such a crisis could engulf the regional countries.

Eritrea has occupied Greater Hanish and rejects negotiations from a position of strength. But Yemen cannot ignore these islands. It looks as if it will spare no effort to retrieve them.

Political experts believe that the posturing and the positions of the two countries provide the conditions for prolonging the crisis. This could have an adverse impact on the region.

Deputies Voice Opinions on Elections, Parties

NC2312131195 Tehran ABRAR in Persian 10 Dec 95 pp 1-2

[Interview with Majles Deputies Hojjat ol-Eslam val-Moslemin Qorban 'Ali Dorri-Najafabadi and Dr. Seyyed Shahabeddin Sadr by unidentified correspondent in Tehran; date not given]

[FBIS Translated Excerpt] [ABRAR] We are approaching the elections. Various controversies surround the

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political factions and a coalition of factions and groups. How do you see the fifth Majles and the existing groups?

[Dorri-Najafabadi] The fifth Majles is distinctive in various aspects. In view of the economic conditions and difficulties and the second Five-Year Development Plan, measures must be envisioned to implement the Second Plan. We should formulate suitable means for continuing the First Plan to extricate our economy from its position as a single-commodity one, boost our Gross National Product [GNP], create a positive balance of trade and healthy and productive employment, increase national savings rates, complete half-finished projects, and survey our strength in the international market.

The fifth Majles will be in charge of the next presidential elections, the ministerial cabinet, and the administration of the country for five to 10 years. So you could say the fate of the country in that time will depend on the fifth Majles, because the next 10 years will see two presidential terms. The shape of the third decade of the revolution will thus be determined by the fifth Majles.

Valuable and effective steps should be taken to combat the cultural assault and spread the culture of religious education. So the Majles will be endowed with greater sensitivity. [passage omitted]

[ABRAR] Which faction is most likely to succeed in the elections?

[Dorri-Najafabadi] The important point in the elections is the unified participation of the people, renewing the pledge of allegiance to the great leader and the system. Our efforts should concentrate on motivating and encouraging the people to participate in this arena. [passage omitted]

As for the party in the lead, that will surely be the Militant Clergy Association. But remember: Objectives and criteria should be pursued without narrowmindedness so that the elections are honorable and powerful and become a powerful motor [preceding word in English] enabling the system to progress.

[ABRAR] What do you think about parties? In view of the circumstances, could there be a multiparty system in the country?

[Dorri-Najafabadi] There should be parties in the country. In the past century we did not have a very favorable experience of parties and our party also had weak points, internal dissent, conflicts, and contradictions. But foreign and extraneous plots were also responsible for its failure. All these factors meant the party system was devoid of popular and Islamic backing. [passage omitted]

[ABRAR] Since there is freedom for parties to operate in the country, why are individuals and groups not seizing this opportunity readily?

[Dorri-Najafabadi] As you have just said, there is complete freedom to form parties. Anyone can take an initiative in this regard. But some points deserve mention.

Unfortunately, in our country the attitude to cooperation and understanding is very feeble. The result is poor tolerance of others' views or different beliefs.

Parties should spell out their thinking, manifesto, regulations, and details of their obligations and stances. Now there are only cliques in the country that are riddled with differences of opinion on the most trivial issues... [ellipsis as published]

[ABRAR] Which parties do you mean?

[Dorri-Najafabadi] Some of the factions and groups have a sort of friendly bias, so they cannot be considered factions. For example, the Tehran Militant Clerics Society is comprised of the most compassionate elements of the revolution. They share common beliefs and principles among themselves, yet are at loggerheads with others; they insist only on their own views. Such coteries have no definite charter. [passage omitted]

[ABRAR] How do you see the Guardians Council role in the elections?

[Dr. Sadr] Naturally, the Guardians Council has obligations according to which it acts and it is also endowed with a distinctive sanctity and reverence. This enables it to supervise the acceptance or rejection of the candidates in an appropriate manner. We hope the Council will be impartial as always and continue to perform its crucial duty.

[ABRAR] What about the freedom of parties?

[Dr. Sadr] There is not nor should there be any obstacle to the political parties or factions. Some individuals are opposed to such freedom and have problems with it but in general I favor political parties. [passage omitted]

Pakistan

Prime Minister Denies Involvement in Indian Arms Drop

BK2812105795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1000 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has vehemently rejected Indian allegations of Pakistani involvement in the recent airdropping of arms in India. Addressing a mammoth public meeting in Gojra in

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Faisalabad Division today, the prime minister said India is raising a hue and cry over the airdropping of arms to cover up its intention to detonate another nuclear explosion. India is trying to divert the attention of the international community as well as its own people from its total failure to overcome its domestic problems and suppress the indigenous freedom movement of the Kashmiris in occupied Kashmir.

The prime minister said Pakistan has a distinguished place in the comity of nations because of the positive and effective role it plays in global affairs. Amid the people's cheers, she announced that Pakistan will not accept Indian hegemony in any field. She accused India of aiding the Altaf Group in creating turmoil and committing acts of terrorism in Karachi.

Referring to local demands, the prime minister announced that an underground bypass will be built below the railway crossing in Gojra. She also gave her formal approval to lay astroturf in the local hockey stadium. Earlier, Benazir Bhutto inaugurated the construction of the multipurpose Gojra Bypass Road and the 2,250-line ultramodern digital telephone exchange. These two projects will cost 220 million rupees.

Foreign Minister Comments

BK2712155095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has expressed surprise, regret, and indignation over Indian Home Minister S.B. Chavan's statement that the needle of suspicion about the mysterious airdropping of arms in eastern India points toward Pakistan's Inter Service Intelligence. In a statement in Islamabad, he described the Indian minister's statement as baseless and irresponsible. The foreign minister said that holding Pakistan responsible for all evils has become the habit of the Indian leadership.

Envoy to India Returns for 'Consultations'

BK2812100395 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 28 Dec 95 p 12

[PPI report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad, Dec 27 — Pakistan High Commissioner in India Riaz Khokhar has arrived here for consultations with the senior Foreign Ministry officials on current state of Pak-India relations.

"Khokhar will be holding consultations with the officials here on entire range of Pak-India relations" informed sources told PPI here Wednesday evening.

Khokhar, who is expected to fly back to New Delhi on Thursday,will meet Foreign Secretary Najmuddin A Sheikh and other senior officials and brief them about the latest developments with reference to India.

Asked if the reported Indian plans to test another nuclear device would also be the subject of discussions between Mr Khokhar and Pakistani officials, the sources said "this is also one of the issues which fall under the jurisdiction of the entire range of Pak- India relations."

Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali had recently warned India of all the consequences if it decided to test another nuclear device while the Foreign Office commenting on the reported Indian plans had declared that it would jeopardise peace and security in South Asia.

Meanwhile, according to an announcement by the Foreign Office, the two countries will be exchanging list of nuclear installations and facilities on January 1 next.

Nuclear Installation Lists Exchange With India Set

BK2712153695 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Pakistan and India will exchange lists of their respective nuclear installations on 1 January. A statement issued by the Foreign Office in Islamabad today says the exchange will take place under Clause 11 of the agreement signed by Pakistan and India in 1988 on not attacking each other's nuclear installations.

Interior Minister Denies FBI Help in Bomb Probe

BK2712145695 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Senate was informed today that following identification of the alleged criminals behind the Peshawar bomb blast, the government is trying to figure out who financially supported this act of terrorism. Winding up the debate on the bomb blast in Peshawar, in which 42 people lost their lives, the interior minister, Mr. Nasirullah Khan Babar, said security agencies are not oblivious. They have been able to defuse some explosives placed on the railway line in Peshawar. Another bomb was detected before it could explode near a public call office.

Mr. Nasirullah Khan Babar informed the house that the car used in the Peshawar bomb blast was registered in Karachi and its registration number was L9958. It was a Toyota Corolla of 1976 model.

The interior minister said it is also the national duty of the opposition to help the government fight these acts of terrorism. He said we are victims of international

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terrorism. Pakistan, he added, had rendered sacrifices for the Afghan cause, but unfortunately, we are being victimized.

Mr. Nasirullah Khan Babar denied that the FBI has been involved in tracing out the terrorists involved in the blast. He said we will only seek FBI's help if necessary in identifying the quality of contents of the explosives.

French NGO Given 3 More Months To Leave

BK2812113095 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 28 Dec 95 p 12

[Report by Rahimullah Yusufzai]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Peshawar — The French aid group, Madera, which was ordered to close down its offices in Pakistan has been allowed another three months to wrap up its activities in Pakistan.

Madera, which says it is providing humanitarian and technical assistance to Afghans, was first served a notice on November 27 to shut down its operations in Pakistan within a fortnight. The visas of its eleven French staffers were also cancelled.

Following talks with Pakistani authorities by Madera head Michel Verron and the French ambassador, the deadline was extended by another 15 days until December 27. [sentence as published]

The second deadline was to expire Wednesday but Jean Francois Cautain, head of Madera office in Peshawar, told The News that the deadline has been extended by another three months. "I and Mr Verron met with NWFP [Northwest Frontier Province] home secretary Tuesday and he communicated to us the decision of the federal interior ministry to extend the deadline," he informed.

The Pakistan government didn't give any reason why action was taken against Madera but it was widely believed that the decision to order closure of the NGO [nongovernmental organization] was taken in wake of intelligence reports that it was providing assistance to the Rabbani government in Kabul. Madera officials had denied the accusation by arguing that their NGO was not involved in politics and was active in eastern Afghanistan where the Kabul regime had no presence.

The initial extension in the deadline was reportedly given to enable Madera to shift its offices across the Pak-Afghan border to Jalalabad. But the three-month extension has raised expectations of Madera officials that they would be eventually allowed to maintain an office in Pakistan.

Cautain argued that Madera needed a liaison office in Peshawar to maintain a bank account, communication links and contacts with its donors. He said talks were continuing with Pakistani authorities to allow Madera to maintain an office in Peshawar. He added that Madera already had plans to shift part of its programme to Jalalabad so that its technical staff could closely monitor and evaluate projects.

It is understood that the government was under pressure from the French government and the European Union not to expel Madera. The Agency Coordinating Body for Afghan Relief (ACBAR), which is the umbrella organisation for Madera and other international NGOs, was also concerned over the action against the French NGO.

Babar Discusses Role of NGOs With Foreign Envoys

BK2812113895 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Overseas Service in English 0800 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The ambassadors of France, Italy, Spain, and European Commission held a meeting with the federal minister for interior, Mr. Nasirullah Khan Babar, in Islamabad today and discussed with him uvarious aspects of the general functioning of foreign NGO's [Nongovernmental Organizations] in Pakistan. They apprised the minister of relief operations being carried out by the NGO's of these countries for the Afghan refugees. They also condemned the recent bomb blast incident in Peshawar and condoled the deaths of innocent people.

The interior minister informed the ambassadors about the steps taken by the government to effectively streamline the operations of foreign NGO's, particularly their relief activities for the Afghan refugees. He said in future, it will be made obligatory for foreign NGO'S to man their offices in Pakistan either with their own nationals or Pakistanis.

Editorial Warns Against U.S. 'Hegemonic Designs'

BK2812080195 Islamabad THE MUSLIM in English 28 Dec 95 p 6

[Editorial: "Trying To Achieve the Impossible"]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] It has always been a good electoral practice for the US presidents not to go soft on China when elections are around the corner. In addition to provocative acts and statements, the Western states under the influence of US, are cajoled to hound Beijing. That seems to be happening now. With the cold war furor, the United States is whipping up China bogey and alarm the states in China's region. Initially the "China threat" had an economic motivation. Scare was spread that cheap labour costs in China would foster an export boom and flood the Western markets.

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That ploy did not work. The emphasis then shifted to the military modernisation of China and its arms sales to other countries. The doubling of Chinese defence budget from $2.6 billion in 1988 to $5.3 billion in 1993 has been widely publicised by Western media. The analysis however, conveniently forgot to mention that the inflation over the past five years adds upto a staggering 78 percent which trims down the increased defence budget to a modest 4 percent in real terms. A significant aspect of defence spending is that a large portion of the increase has been used to improve the standard of living of the soldiers. Another important feature of Chinese defence budget is that it amounts to 1.44 percent of gross domestic product as compared to 5 percent for the United States. Seen against the backdrop of this marginal increase slightened further by the nature of the spending, all the furor about the doubling of defence budget is no more than a flimsy hoax.

Escalating the absurdity to dizzying heights, the US House of Representatives overwhelmingly approved a bill asking the president to lean hard on China for the improvement of its human rights record. Equally absurd was the move to allocate $2.5 million budget for clandestine activities against Iran. Like the propaganda campaign of "China threat" in the Asia Pacific, the "Iranian threat" is being publicised in the Middle East. An unusual US military build-up is noticeable in the region. The pretext is military exercises with the so-called threatened states in the Gulf. The notorious Israeli agency Mossad, is collaborating with its equally abhorrent American counterpart CIA to hatch conspiracies against the Iranian state. From time to time rumours of Pak-Iranian nuclear cooperation are also planted to give a new dimension to anti-Iran and anti-Pakistan propaganda. It makes the perceived image of Iran loom large over the Persian Gulf states. At the same time it aims at straining Pakistan's relations with the Arabs.

These US ventures point to a bleak future. It shows how dangerous the world is going to be under the dreaded New World Order. The evil winds are already blowing with a gale force and could assume hurricane proportions in the 21st century. It is time to wake up to the hegemonic designs of the US, though the unipolarity of the US dominated world cannot last for ever. Starting from the Roman Empire, the rabid philosophy has been tried by many. It never worked. All the same, the process did inflict sufferings on humanity. The economic costs of maintaining the unnatural order are staggering and the US is already reeling under the pressure irrespective of its partially successfully efforts to make the dominated states bear the cost. The world's unwillingness to accept Washington as Capital of Earth is amply indicated by the UN General Assembly votes on Cuban sanctions, the status of Al-Quds [Jerusalem] and many more issues besides. But, how soon the giant, with the Golden Dwarf with its midget mind accepts the reality will determine the extent of human suffering.

Scientific Cooperation Accord Signed With Syria

BK2712141395 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Governments of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan and the Syrian Arab Republic have signed an agreement on scientific and technical cooperation in Islamabad today. The special assistant to the prime minister on social sector, Begum Shahnaz Wazir Ali, signed on behalf of Pakistan, whereas Dr. Salihah Sunqur, minister of higher education of Syria, signed on behalf of the Syrian Government. The agreement envisages cooperation in all fields of science and technology; exchange of books, journals, and other science and technology publications; exchange of visits of scientists, training fellowships, and working of joint research projects; joint organizational seminars and workshops on topics of mutual interest; and exchange of delegations.

Asif Ali on Ties With Africa; Kashmir, Afghanistan

BK2712053195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has underlined the importance of Pakistan's close and friendly ties with the African countries. He stated this while speaking at a ceremony held in Islamabad yesterday to award certificates to the participants of the fifth specialized diplomatic course at the Foreign Service Academy. He said Pakistan is facing new challenges and is playing an important role in solving the sensitive issues of South Asia, including the crises in Kashmir and Afghanistan, as well as the nuclear issue. He said Pakistan has played an effective role in the United Nations in connection with the right of self- determination and freedom to all African states and extended all possible cooperation to them. Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali said Pakistan wants India to implement the UN resolutions on the Kashmir issue. He said the Government of Pakistan succeeded in highlighting the Kashmir issue at international level by effectively raising it at all international fora. He reiterated that Pakistan will continue to support efforts of the United Nations and Organization of Islamic Conference towards the resolution of the Afghanistan tangle.

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Editorial Criticizes Asif for 'Absurd Statements'

BK2712093295 Karachi JASARAT in Urdu 24 Dec 95 p 3

[Editorial: "These Contradictory Statements Will Ruin Us"]

[FBIS Translated Text] Foreign Minister Sardar Asif Ahmad Ali has said that Pakistan will provide a fitting response to India's missiles and we will not allow India to gain superiority over us in missile technology. If India prepares missiles, then Pakistan will also do the same. India will be responsible for all the repercussions in South Asia if it carries out a nuclear test. The foreign minister further said that we will give India the status of most favored nation [MFN], but we will not allow it to ruin Pakistan's economy.

The foreign minister is famous all over the country for issuing absurd statements, but his aforementioned statements show that he has developed quite an expertise in this art. Another interpretation of his statements could be that Pakistani policy makers have plunged into extraordinary confusion regarding India. They are unable to decide on their attitude to India, particularly in view of its recent activities. How strange it is that India is preparing a nuclear test, installing missiles on the Pakistani borders, resorting to all kinds of atrocious measures to crush the freedom movement in Kashmir while Pakistani rulers are insisting that India should be given the status of most favored nation. Calling the enemy an enemy and still bestowing favors on him is a totally unprecedented attitude.

The foreign minister's melodramatic statement that we will not allow India to gain superiority in missiles technology sounds very impressive, but the problem is that India has already gained superiority in this field and is installing those missiles on the Pakistani border to show its superiority. The foreign minister has also said that India will be responsible for any repercussions if it carries out a nuclear test. Obviously, if India carries out a nuclear test, it will also be responsible for the results. So this is unimportant for us. The thing that is important for us is who will be responsible for the effects that this explosion will have on Pakistan? India did not seek anyone's permission when it carried out its first nuclear explosion, nor will it do so when carrying out a second test. However, the problem with the Pakistani rulers is that before doing anything they have to seek permission from the United States. If they get the permission, they do it; otherwise, they ditch the plan by declaring it unfeasible.

It appears that the foreign minister has issued a very important statement by saying that we will definitely give India the status of a most favored nation but will not allow it to destroy Pakistan's economy. Obviously, this statement speaks of two contradictory things because declaring India MFN in itself is synonymous with strangling Pakistan's economy.

The ambiguity and contradiction that has emerged in our foreign policy towards India is not without reason. The fact is that the United States, wants Pakistan to give India the MFN status. It is unfortunate for our rulers that the United States has ordered them to do this at a juncture when, for many reasons, relations between India and Pakistan are strained. This is why the Pakistani leaders are unable to connect the various aspects of the unfriendly relations between India and Pakistan and at the same time have no justification for what they are saying. Obviously, their statements will be like the ones issued by the foreign minister. We are afraid that these contradictory statements and this ambivalence will lead to our doom. The reason is that this ambivalence is badly affecting the morale of the Pakistan people and they are unable to understand what is happening around them.

Envoy Suggests Steps To Enhance UN Peacekeeping

BK2212120095 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1100 GMT 22 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Pakistan has suggested that the United Nations should act immediately wherever peace was threatened. It should act before the outbreak of any conflict rather than intervene once the conflict had already erupted. This was stated at the Security Council meeting in New York by Pakistan's permanent representative, Mr. Ahmad Kamal. The meeting discussed proposals to enhance transparency and effectiveness of consultations on peacekeeping operations between the Council and the troops contributing countries. Mr. Ahmad Kamal said his country supports the need for a more formal and institutionalized mechanism of consultations between troops contributors and the Security Council to create broad-based support among the member states for peacekeeping operations.

'Major Breakthrough' in Trade Ties With China

BK1812074795 Karachi BUSINESS RECORDER in English 17 Dec 95 p 1,10

[Report by Saqlain Imam]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Lahore: China has given Pakistan a categorical commitment to balance the escalating trade deficit favouring the former by $360 million in a total bilateral trade volume of $540 million in 1994-95.

Disclosing this to Business Recorder on Saturday evening, Makhdum Shahabuddin Minister of State for

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Finance, said that the trade deficit would grow further as the total volume of bilateral trade had crossed the figure of $700 million in the first nine months of this year.

He said China had agreed to place orders in the private, as well as public sector to Pakistani counterparts for the import of agro- industrial products from Pakistan on top priority basis in order to balance the trade deficit, currently against Pakistan.

Shahabuddin said it is a major breakthrough in Sino-Pak bilateral trade relations because Pakistan, due to strategic reasons, had been striving hard to seek this favour from China for the last 25 years. However, this time the Chinese authorities have given a firm commitment to Pakistan in this regard.

He said the matter was discussed by him with Chinese Minister for Foreign Trade and Economic Affairs Wu Yi in a joint ministerial committee meeting during his recent Beijing visit concluded this week.

He said this trip was much more significant and more important in substance than merely exchanging pleasantries between the two friendly countries with decades old excellent ties.

He also said with this commitment, impressions about "cooling" in the Sino-Pak relations would wither away.

China has been in the recent past trying to mend relations with India. This was viewed by certain observers as "no longer a reliable friend." However with this major breakthrough between the two nations, the situation has become completely clear in favour of Pakistan. Moreover, this trade support would also help Pakistan in today's world when it runs short of foreign currency reserves.

Germany Pledges Funding To Assist in Projects

BK2112034495 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 20 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Germany has pledged an amount of 125 million deutsche mark to the Government of Pakistan for various important projects. A bilateral agreement on financing cooperation for the period 1995-96 was signed by Secretary of Economic Affairs Division Aftab Ahmad Khan and the German ambassador, Juergen Kleiner, on behalf of their respective governments in Islamabad today. The major power projects to be assisted are Ghazi Barotha hydroelectric power project, Kot Addu power station, commodity aid for import of Potash fertilizer, credit line for Bank of Khyber, and primary health care program in the northern region.

President Urges Muslim States To Pool Resources

BK2712105595 Islamabad THE NEWS in English 27 Dec 95 pp 1, 10

[Unattributed report]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad — President Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari Tuesday called on Muslim states to pool their resources and establish a scientific and technical network to end their a total dependency" on more advanced nations.

Muslim countries seem to be more in favor of buying science and technology from the world super market, rather than developing it at home by promoting indigenous efforts and sources," President Leghari said.

This attitude had prevented the Muslim nations from becoming self-reliant and pushed them into a total dependency", he said in a speech at a ministerial session of the Islamic Committee on Science and Technological Cooperation (Comstech).

Leghari said the Islamic world had vast resources, but had yet to learn how to pool its intellectual and physical capabilities to achieve collective strength. "The time has come when most Islamic countries with similar problems must undertake cooperative science and technology programmes so as to augment each other's efforts," he added.

Leghari, who is president of Comstech, lashed out the failure of Islamic countries to take the committee seriously, "we only pay it lip service, express some wishful thinking, take some ad-hoc steps, issue high-sounding statement but never follow it up seriously."

Islamic countries should take "cognizance" of all innovative ideas.

They must consciously pursue policies of "leap-frogging" in the acquisition of newer technology, he said adding that "they must be producers of technology and not only its passive recipients".

He called for identifying urgent needs of individual Islamic countries which should be addressed through common approach and coordinated efforts. The president said Pakistan is ready to share its experience with the fellow Muslim countries to address their food problems.

The president said as we stand at the threshold of the new century we see an Ummah divided, facing serious political, social and economic problems. Illiteracy, disease, malnutrition, food deficiencies, energy shortages, environmental hazards, security weaknesses, all stare us in the face.

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While the industrially advanced countries prepare themselves to move into a willed future, we languish in ignorance, even dissipating whatever natural strengths we are blessed with, Leghari said.

How then do we enter the 21st century with any hope of achieving a major transformation from our present unhappy state? I am convinced that we are where we are and must therefore suffer because we turned our back on the Quran.

Leghari pointed out that of the total world investment in research and development, nearly 97 per cent is made by the advanced countries and only one per cent by the Muslim countries.

Presenting facts as to why the Ummah did not progress in the field is lack of awareness of decision makers about the real potential and power of science and technology. Another important fact, he said, is that we in the Muslim countries have not learnt to work together in cooperation and collaboration. The Muslim world must focus attention on the potential of biotechnology as a tool for economic development and future prosperity, he pointed out.

The president said, if we are to harness science and technology in the service of our people, I suggest that we re-prioritize our development objectives to include mass literacy, technological education and development of human resources; promotion of economic growth; reduction of poverty; improvement in health and scientific management of resources and environment.

This would not necessarily entail much more requirements of funds or setting up expensive establishments.

Secretary General of OIC [Organization of Islamic Conference] Hamid Al-Gabid on the occasion called for strengthening scientific cooperation among member states to achieve high levels of skill in science and technology. Gabid said the developed countries devote enormous resources to scientific research and their budget varies from 0.3 and 1.2 per cent of the national income.

Hamid Al-Gabid expressed satisfaction over the adoption of the Islamabad Declaration on Science and Technology which comprises general outline of the purposes and goals set by the signatory states and affirms their political pledge to succeeded by the men of the century, in setting up an adequate system that will enable them to have access to the most advanced technology.

He said Comstech is an important tool for identifying effective ways and means to reach the objectives of the declaration.

He expressed the hope that the unfailing commitment of Pakistan to strengthen joint Islamic action and its constant support for the fulfillment of aspirations of the Ummah through active solidarity the Comstech session will enjoy anticipated success.

In the welcoming address, Shehnaz Wazir Ali, special assistant to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, said the Muslim world had to spend billions of dollars on acquiring the latest technology.

We are exposed to vicious economic exploitation and domination. We are living in a highly unbalanced world order," she said criticising embargoes by developed nations on the transfer of technology to developing nations.

Set up in 1981 by the 62-nation Organization of Islamic Conference, COMSTECH aims to build up the indigenous capability of Islamic countries in science and technology through collective efforts and mutual assistance. Headed by Pakistan, it meets every two years.

The conference ends on Thursday.

Bhutto Discusses Sharif Letter With Ministers

BK2712050695 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The prime minister has shared the contents of opposition leader Mohammad Nawaz Sharif's letter with the four provincial chief ministers in Islamabad. It may be recalled that the government had invited the opposition for talks on the restoration of women's seats and the repeal of eighth amendment of the constitution. The chief ministers and the government's allied parties totally rejected the opposition's demand to hold elections before the scheduled date. They expressed the view that the opposition leader's letter has nothing to do with reality, because there is no comparison between the situation that existed in 1993 and the one in 1995. They said efforts are being made to tackle the economic crisis inherited from the previous government. Pakistan is not aloof from the international community. The army has been withdrawn from Sindh and the government is active in implementing its agenda. They stated that the talks with the opposition should be on constitutional issues, which are significant to the manifestos of both the government and the opposition.

Sindh Assembly Condemns Opposition Statement

BK2712160995 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 27 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Sindh Assembly has adopted a motion moved by Lal Bux that condemns the

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unconstitutional statement by opposition leader Nawaz Sharif at a conference in Islamabad on 25 December, in which he called for the dismissal of the governor and chief minister of Sindh. Fifteen members, including the mover of the motion, participated in the discussion of the motion. The house will meet again tomorrow.

Law Minister Professor N.D. Khan has asked the opposition leader to explain his party's position on the Altaf Group's demand for the division of Sindh along ethnic lines. The demand was made by Ajmal Dehlvi, leader of the Altaf Group's negotiating team, at a conference on Karachi organized in Islamabad by the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Group on the occasion of the birthday of the great leader [Mohammad Ali Jinnah]. Addressing a news conference in Islamabad this afternoon, the federal minister said the demand for the appointment of a chief executive for Sindh Province is an affront to parliamentary democracy. He regretted that such a proposal was put forward at a conference organized by the opposition at a time when the situation in Karachi is gradually returning to normal. He said the opposition's suggestions are designed to destabilize the situation and incite confrontation.

Minister Rejects Opposition Call for Midterm Election

BK2112144095 Islamabad PTV Television Network in English 1300 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The minister for law, justice and parliamentary affairs, Professor N.D. Khan, has categorically rejected the possibility of any midterm polls and said elections would be held according to schedule in 1998. He was winding up debate on the presidential address in the National Assembly today, which was prorogued after expressing its deep gratitude to the president for his address to the joint sitting.

The law minister said there is no legal or moral justification for holding elections in the country. The nation wanted that the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] should complete its full term of five years. An objective analysis of the 26 months' rule of the present government clearly shows that the country is moving forward on the road to progress and prosperity. Strongly defending the policies of the government, the law minister said these are meant to make the country strong and people prosperous. The government, he said, has always tried to solve the national issues through mutual consultations with the opposition. However, the opposition instead of cooperating with the government in the greater national interest has chosen to follow the path of confrontation to suit their own ends. Referring to the Karachi situation, he said it has improved considerably and asked the opposition to force the Altaf Group to resume negotiations with government. Referring to Kashmir, he said it is a national issue and nobody can compromise on that.

Participating in the debate, the leader of the opposition, Mian Mohammad Nawaz Sharif, asked the government to accept his proposal regarding midterm polls. He said if his proposal is accepted, then we can solve all the other issues in the house through a package. The package, he said, would include Eighth Amendment [to the Constitution], women's representation, setting up of a permanent accountability commission, independence of judiciary, and other issues relating to elections. He was of the view that his party does not believe in a policy of confrontation and alleged that the government never reciprocated its offer of cooperation on national issues. As a matter of fact, he said, the opposition offered unconditional cooperation for the solution of Karachi issue but it was rejected by the government.

Mr. Mozaffar Ahmad Hashmi in his speech referred to Indian nuclear and missile programs and said Pakistani nation would never accept the Indian hegemony. Mian Amjad Yasin criticized the performance of the government during the last two years.

MQM Leader Warns of Government Attack on Hyderabad

BK2212141395 (Internet) MQM NEWS in English 15 Dec 95

[Press release issued by Altaf Hussain, leader of Mujahir Qaumi Movement, in London on 14 December]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Quaid-e-Tehrik [Leader of the Movement], in a press release from London, said that Government is preparing for a grand operation in Hyderabad. The operation can start at any time. Heavy contingency of government troops comprised of in famous SS-Force of Pakistan Rangers, Police, and Frontier Constabulary along with members of various intelligence agencies have been deployed in the whole city of Hyderabad and Lateefabad.

Quaid-e-Tehrik asked people of Hyderabad and Lateefabad to be careful and be attentive.

MQM Chief Writes on Death of Relatives

BK2012045795 (Internet) MQM NEWS in English 13 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Quaid-e-Tehrik [movement leader] Altaf Hussain have appealed to patriotic citizens of Pakistan to take an immediate action on the worsening situation of Urban Sindh. In his open letter from London, while addressing country's philosophers, journalists, religious scholars, politicians, and citizens from

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every walk of life, he described the severe human rights violations against Muhajirs by the government troops.

On-Going Muhajir Genocide in the Urban Sindh

Quaid-e-Tehrik have termed the murders of innocent MQM [Muhajir Qaumi Movement] workers and supporters in the Urban Sindh as part of the well planned genocide of Muhajir population. In his letter he questioned patriotic Pakistanis as why Muhajirs are being treated the way they are? What is their crime? Why hundreds and thousands of Muhajirs are booked in the false and fabricated charges? Why well planned murders of Muhajir youths are being carried out in the security agencies custody? He further writes that the operation which started on June 19, 1992 to crush MQM, the third largest political organisation of Pakistan is on going and nobody is there to raise voice against severe injustices in the Urban Sindh.

Arrests of Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain in the Government's Custody

Quaid-e-Tehrik, in his open letter writes that the murders of his brother Nasir Hussain and nephew Arif Hussain on December 9, 1995, under security agencies custody, is a well planned conspiracy of federal and Sindh's provincial government. He further gave details of the brutal incident according to which Rangers and police officials along with IB [Intelligence Bureau], CIA [Crime Investigation Agency] and FC [Frontier Corps] officials raided the house of Nasir Hussain in Federal B Area, on the 5th December, and arrested his son Arif Hussain 28. Arif was transported to an unknown location. Quaid-e-Tehrik writes that Arif Hussain have never participated in the politics. He was NED [expansion unknown] graduate. After graduation he got a job and started to support his family. The officials also threatened the family members of Arif to not to tell anyone about his arrest otherwise they will kill him. The family members remained in great fear on 5th and 6th December as they found out that Arif is being severely tortured. Specially his father Nasir Hussain 66, got very disturbed. On December 6th evening, while the family members were still waiting for Arif's release, Rangers, police and FC officials again raided the home of Nasir Hussain and this time they arrested Nasir Hussain and transported him to an unknown location.

MQM Coordination Committee's Emergency Telegrams Seeking Release of Nasir and Arif Hussain

Quaid-e-Tehrik in his letter writes that upon knowing the arrests of Nasir and Arif Hussain and fearing for the danger to their lives, on December 7th, MQM Coordination committee immediately faxed and telegrams dozens of letters to various personals and governmental agencies. In these telegrams they notified the arrests and appealed to take immediate action to save their lives. Also MQM Coordination Committee Convenor Senator Ishtiaq Azhar in his newspaper statement demanded from President of Pakistan Farooq Leghari to act immediately for the safety of detainees. His statement published in almost all major newspapers of Pakistan.

Rangers Press Note Denying the Arrests of Nasir and Arif Hussain

But on December 8th in a press note by Rangers Information Department denied the arrests of Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain and also claimed that both are neither in the rangers nor in police custody. Quaid-e-Tehrik in his letter writes, that this was one of its own type of press release which severly went against the rules and regulations. He writes that Rangers work under Ministry of Interior while police under provincial government. Therefore police is not responsible for responding any matter involving Rangers and vice versa. But in the press release Rangers also claimed on the behalf of police. That press release created doubts and fears among Muhajirs about the safety of both detainees. Once again several telegrams and emergency communications were carried out by MQM Coordination committee with the President of Pakistan, DG FIA [director general of Federal Investigation Agency], Chief Justices of Supreme and High courts appealing for immediate action to save the lives of Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain.

Quaid-e-Tehrik's Stand Over the Arrests of Nasir and Arif Hussain

In his letter Quaid-e-Tehrik writes that since the earlier reports of the arrests of my brother and nephew, I have maintained that I will not communicate with any government official. I knew that by taking these actions government is trying to intimidate me, but everybody knows that when my brother in law Muhammad Aslam 61, was arrested on September 26, 1995, I have'nt communicated with any official for his release and he is still in the government's custody. If government thinks that by arresting my relatives government will decrease my courage it is wrong. I have never done any favors for my family or relatives in the past. My struggle is for the well being of all Muhajirs and downtrodden people of Pakistan. As much as I value the lives of innocent Muhajirs, same as for my own family. Thousands of innocent people belonging to my nation have been murdered and thousands are in the custody, therefore I maintained that I will not beg for the lives of my own blood relatives, no matter what.

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Brutal Murders of Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain

Quaid-e-Tehrik further writes that after the arrests of Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain various high level meetings took place in Karachi. In the mean time almost all newspapers published the detailed reports of the arrests of Nasir and Arif Hussain. Therefore in the high level meetings upon considering the situation that Altaf Hussain is not giving up his courage therefore now its time to give him emotional torture. This could be done by killing his relatives. On the other hand the SOS telegrams from MQM coordination committee to different personals were continued but as a last resort my brother and nephew were brutally tortured to death and their bodies were thrown at Guddap. Who knows which of my family members got killed first my 66 year old brother Nasir Hussain or his son, my nephew 28 years old Arif Hussain. But just imagine that what they have felt when one of them was being shot and other seeing and waiting for the end of his own. What was their sin? This is not a story or a fiction. It is a reality. Yes it happened in the home of Altaf Hussain. Today every Muhajir home is the living example of "Karbala [place where Muhammad's grandchildren were martyred]". Every street and every town is watching the replay of same tragedies every day. For the struggle.. for the ideology.. therefore for the same high principals today Altaf Hussain's 66 year old brother have sacrificed his own life... his son gave his own blood. But remember Altaf Hussain is not fearful, he is not afraid. Every Muhajir family is Altaf Hussain's own family. Every Haqparast [rights advocacy] movement progresses with the drops of sacred blood. Today Altaf Hussain's own family have donated their own blood for the sacred ritual. And this is why I am not sad. Because so many brothers like my own and so many nephews like my own have already sacrificed their lives for the struggle. Today is the day of new courage new strength and that strength will keep our mission alive and will take us towards success.

Chief Minister Abdullah Shah, Governor Sindh Kamal Azfar, Interior Minister Nasirullah Babar, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto and President Farooq Ahmad Legahri are directly involved in the murders of Nasir and Arif Hussain

Quaid-e-Tehrik in his open letter have held government, Chief minister Abdullah Shah, Governor Sindh Kamal Azfar, Nasirullah Babar, Benazir Bhutto and Farooq Legahri responsible for the murders of Nasir Hussain and Arif Hussain. He writes that I have solid proofs of each and everybody who committed this brutal act. He held Abdullah Shah directly responsible while others for aiding and supporting in this plan. He writes that he had sent a written report to Gulberg police station for the FIR [first information report] but it was not filed and the FIR were denied by the station officials. I will file a FIR because I am fully aware of the names and designations of each and everyone involved. I have all the proofs and will release it on right time because otherwise the witnesses will might be murdered too. But I with utmost confident knows that if Court could involve SHO [Station House Officer] Gulberg Khwaja Shah Muhammad in the investigation then all the names will become obvious. Quaid-e-Tehrik also demanded a panel of International Judges so that justice would be served. At the end he appealed to all patriotic Pakistanis to not to leave Muhajirs alone in this struggle.

Opposition PML-N Forms Anticorruption Committee

BK1812085595 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 18 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] The Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz Group [PML-N] has announced the formation of an Anticorruption Committee with National Assembly member Khwaja Asif as its head. Announcing the decision in Islamabad yesterday, members of the committee said that corruption has weakened the country's economy; all spheres of life have been affected by this evil. They said the federal government has failed to check corruption but the PML-N will fight it.

A Pakistan People's Party spokesman in Islamabad, commenting on the formation of the Anticorruption Committee by the PML-N, said the whole nation knows how those who are raising a hue and cry against corruption have increased their assets from one factory to 22 factories. He also referred to a number of deals and accused the opposition leaders of amassing wealth and mismanaging the country's economy.

Altaf Group 'Terrorist,' 5 Accomplices Arrested

BK2112160795 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 1500 GMT 21 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] Police arrested Anis Ahmad, an Altaf Group terrorist and in charge of Korangi Unit, (Satto); and his five accomplices in Karachi today. According to the police, three kalashnikov rifles, six pistols, and 87 rounds of ammunition were recovered from their possession. During the interrogation, Anis Ahmad confessed he had murdered four police constables.

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Altaf 'Terrorists' Killed in Police Encounters

BK2812040195 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in Urdu 0200 GMT 28 Dec 95

[FBIS Translated Text] ASSOCIATED PRESS OF PAKISTAN reports that two terrorists from the Altaf Group were killed in two separate encounters with police in Korangi and Orangi Extension areas of Karachi. One person was killed in Ammar Yasir Colony under the jurisdiction of Malir police station. Police in Hyderabad said that they have arrested 22 terrorists from whom a huge quantity of arms and ammunition were also recovered. Police also claim to have unearthed a torture cell in Khata Chowk area in the city.

Daily Reports on Karamat as New Chief of Army Staff

BK2012135195 Islamabad THE NATION in English 19 Dec 95 pp 1,9

[Report by Amir Mateen]

[FBIS Transcribed Text] Islamabad - General Abdul Waheed at the end of his tenure as Chief of the Army Staff [COAS] on January 12 will be succeeded by Chief of General Staff Lt. Gen Jehanfir Karamat.

This was announced by the Ministry of Defense in a handout which further says that President Farooq Lehari has promoted Jahangir Karamat as General with immediate effect.

However, he will take charge as the COAS on January 12 when General Waheed retires. General Karamat later called on the President, expressing his thanks and assuring him that "he would do his utmost to serve the country and the nation to the best of his capabilities."

Jahanfir Karamat's promotion as General earlier than his taking over as the COAS has been announced to cover the gap of seven days he ha between his retirement and his becoming the next chief. The other option would have been either to give him an extension of seven days or to retire General Waheed prematurely.

But this has saved the President from giving an extension, though a brief one. Now we have two Generals in the Pakistan Army till January 12.

General Jehangir Karamat was the senior most among the corps commanders, if we exclude the four Lieutenant Generals who were already on extensions. With his appointment, the President has restored the tradition of picking up the senior most Lieutenant General as the COAS. The tradition was first broken when General Ziaul Haq, who was eight on the seniority list, was picked as the COAS, the move the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] regrets to this day. Then again General Waheed was made the COAS, bypassing four Lieutenant Generals senior to him.

The announcement come quite late causing intense speculation in the Press. The period of 24 days is the shortest time any chief has got for a regular send off. The minimum time otherwise is 45 days. Even if General Waheed makes a whirlwind tour of all important Army stations, he would have to drop many cantonments.

He also goes into history as the only General who has refused an extension despite the insistence of both the President and the Prime Minister, as admitted by the official media.

The appointment of General Jehangir Karamat also leaves no possibility of his immediate juniors getting an extension, which otherwise was quite possible had General Waheed got an extension. The second on the seniority list, General Karamat's course mate Lt. Gen Naseer Akhtar retires somewhere in March. The next two down the line, Lt. Gen Nazar and Lt Gen Tariq, are also due to retire within tow months after him.

General Karamat will be the ninth COAS after Field Marshal Ayb Khan, General Musa Khan, General Yahya Khan, General Gul Hasan, General Tikka Khan, General Ziaul Haq, General Aslam Beg, General Asif Nawaz and General Waheed in this order of succession.

The announcement may have caused lost of unrest due to delay, but Jehanfir Karamat is likely to be one of those lucky Generals in Pakistan's history whose appointment will not be controversial. Though the normal procedure for any appointment is that the Defense Ministry sends a list of three nominees, who are actually the candidates of the Army, from whom the President selects the Chief. Official quarters, however, are mum whether this procedure was followed or not. In case it was followed the names of the other two candidates could not be known.

APP [Associated Press of Pakistan] adds: On completion of his tenure a chief of Army Staff, Gen. Abdul Waheed, NI(M), HI(M), S.Bt will be retiring on January 12, 1996, a Defense Ministry Handout issued on Monday said.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has promoted Lieutenant General Jehargir Karamat, HI(M), T. Bt. as General in the Pakistan army with immediate effect, the Handout said.

APP adds: The President and the Prime Minister have lauded the services of General Abdul Waheed for enhancing the professionalism of Pak Army and security of the country. It may be recalled that the President

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and the Prime Minister had asked General Waheed to consider a year's extension in service but the outgoing army chief had preferred to retire on time so as to set a healthy precedent.

Life profile of Gen. Karamat: Born on February 20, 1941, General Jehangir Karamat was commissioned in the Pakistan Army in command and Staff College and National Defense College. The General has vast experience or command, staff and instructional appointments. He is also qualified from Command and Staff College, Fort Leavenworth, U.S.A.

The General has commanded an independent armoured brigade, an infantry division and a corps. He has served on the faculty of Command and Staff College and National Defense College.

He has been the Director General of Military Operations and was presently serving as Chief of the General Staff. The Chief of the Army Staff designate has seen action in the wars of 1965 and 1971. He has been awarded Hilal-e-Imtiaz (Military) and Tamgha-e-Basalat for his meritorious services.

He is married and has two sons and a daughter.

PPP Appreciates Bhutto's 'Forceful Diplomacy'

BK1912152995 Islamabad Radio Pakistan Network in English 1400 GMT 19 Dec 95

[FBIS Transcribed Text] The Central Executive Committee [CEC] of the PPP [Pakistan People's Party] has expressed its firm resolve to make Pakistan a modern and progressive Muslim nation and a bastion against international terrorism. The committee which met in Islamabad today under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto, has observed that the party has embarked upon a well-crafted set of economic, legislative and foreign policy agenda.

The committee said that Pakistan can act as a bridge between South Asia and Central Asia and the Middle East with the forceful diplomacy pursued by the prime minister. The passage of Brown amendment was referred by the committee as a case in point saying that the government of PPP has succeeded in fully normalizing Pakistan's relations with the United States. The committee particularly expressed satisfaction that Kashmir has remained the top priority of the government which took initiative to launch a concerted campaign to highlight India's repression in occupied Jammu and Kashmir which has put India on the defensive.

Giving details of the deliberations of the meeting, the new acting secretary of information of the party, Mr. Iqbal Haider, and Senator Shafqat Mahmud said that the party's central executive regretted that the opposition has not responded positively to the various initiatives taken by the prime minister for changes in the eighth amendment. It also regretted that unfortunately the prime minister's offers for dialogue to the opposition were taken as a weakness of the government. Instead, the unprincipled alliance of PML [Pakistan Muslim League]-Nawaz Group with ANP [Awami National Party] and the Altaf Group is hatching a conspiracy to destabilize democracy and democratic institutions and encouraging forces addicted to violence and terrorism.

The CEC of PPP observed that the government as mandated by the people will complete its five year tenure and implement its socioeconomic agenda.

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